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The TWILIGHT *of* CHRISTIANITY

HARRY ELMER BARNES

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THE TWILIGHT OF CHRISTIANITY

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The TWILIGHT *of* CHRISTIANITY

By

HARRY ELMER BARNES

Author of

THE GENESIS OF THE WORLD WAR, LIVING IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY, ETC.

1889-

New York

THE VANGUARD PRESS

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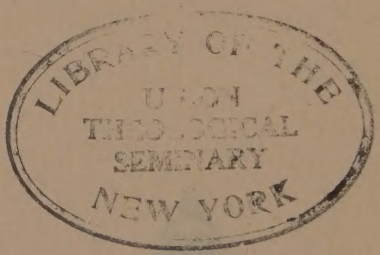

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PREFACE

A CONSIDERABLE amount of misunderstanding and unjust criticism may be averted if at the outset the writer makes it clear that he has no desire or intention of attacking religion in a comprehensive and undiscriminating fashion in the present book. In the address which he delivered in December, 1928, as a Vice-President of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, which drew the fire of Cardinal Hayes, Dr. Osborn and others he gave his audience the same assurance. The chief thesis which the writer desires to advance is that the old supernatural concepts and criteria relating to human conduct and its objectives should be discredited and abolished as rapidly as possible and supplanted by strictly secular and mundane considerations. He is willing to defend secularism to any extreme and against all comers from the supernatural camp. As far as the writer is interested in either attacking religion or supporting religion, the whole issue revolves about the degree to which the particular religion concerned espouses the secular or the supernatural position. The writer is unalterably opposed to all vestiges of the old supernaturalism, with its distorted and rudimentary views of the universe, God, man and human life. He is equally cordial to any type of secular religion devoted to the cause of making this life here on earth more pleasant and worth while. Therefore, no person affiliated with any form of religion which accepts modern scientific knowledge and works in harmony with science and æsthetics in the effort to promote the good life here on

earth can logically dissent from the general tone and viewpoint of this book, however much he may differ as to matters of detail and emphasis.

That the passing of supernaturalism carries with it by implication and quite inevitably the disappearance of any legitimate function of religion among men no calm and informed observer would for a moment contend. He would merely hold that we now face an epoch of religious reconstruction the like of which the world has never before contemplated or experienced. Some writers have been pleased to compare the present age with the religious revolution of the later Roman Empire, but any such comparison is superficial and misleading. What happened in the later Roman Empire was the dissolution of the older state religions and the archaic religious philosophies and their replacement by other supernatural cults, the process being accompanied by "a failure of nerve" and a growth of credulity and ignorance. Today, we have all forms of supernaturalism challenged by an ever greater body of irrefutable scientific facts. Our age is one which is characterized by the development of a secular and critical orientation upon the part of the intellectual leaders. Fundamentalism, Catholic and Protestant, has burned its bridges behind it and it is only a matter of time until it must decay and disintegrate. What lies ahead is a field for the prophet and not for the historian and sociologist. While many scientists would vigorously dissent, the writer believes that a secularized social religion will prove very valuable, if not indispensable, in providing social control for the future. It can be very useful in exploiting man's group emotions in support of just causes like the abolition of poverty and war and in coöperating with æsthetics to produce a better popular appreciation of the true and the beautiful in life.

When the writer has listened to preachers like Sherwood Eddy, Harry Ward and Francis J. McConnell denouncing our current social injustices, those like Albert C. Dieffenbach, C. F. Potter and A. Wakefield Slaten denouncing religious cowardice and intolerance, those like Kirby Page revealing the imbecilities of war and militarism, those like Charles Clayton Morrison working for international justice and peace, those like William N. Guthrie arguing for more joy in life, those like Harry Emerson Fosdick making a plea for a reconstruction of morals on æsthetic grounds, and those like John H. Dietrich, Curtis W. Reese and John Haynes Holmes trying to create a secular religion which will bring about a real revolution in civilization, he has felt that in such trends as these there are to be discerned praiseworthy symptoms which the natural and social scientist alike may well approve and support. If these are to be the dominant traits of the religion of the future then the scientist has little ground for apprehensiveness and much cause for rejoicing.

The chief issue involved is not the adequacy or splendor of such religious conceptions but the possibility of engrafting this noble twig upon the tree of ancient and savage supernaturalism. Will men flock to the support of a humanitarian cult dominated by considerations of love, justice and beauty with the same enthusiasm they have brought to the support of religions which have exploited their fears, hatreds and jealousies? That is the real question about the future of religion, and no person, lay or clerical, can legitimately presume to give a definite answer today. Tolerant and appreciative coöperation should exist between all scientists and all clergymen who are endeavoring to promote secularism, enlightenment and human happiness. The scientist must provide the specific factual element in the new morals and ideals, but the

church may well be even more effective in putting them into practical application.

If the present book brings clearly before the reader the outstanding elements in the religious revolution of today and indicates without evasion the nature and extent of the readjustments which religion must make in the light of contemporary knowledge, the main purpose of the writer will have been achieved.

The writer would protest in advance against being blamed by the orthodox for the discoveries made by natural scientists in the last century and for the progress of biblical and historical scholarship during this same period. For the development of the information and attitudes which have undermined the orthodox view of things he disclaims any responsibility whatever. His sole responsibility is to be found in the accuracy of his summary of scholarly progress and in the logic of the deductions that he has drawn therefrom. In this regard he is willing to endure any honest and legitimate criticism, however severe.

The author is indebted to his friend and former colleague, Professor Granville Hicks, for a critical reading of the galley proofs, and to Mr. Kirby Page for his courtesy in allowing an examination of his excellent book, *Jesus or Christianity?*, in galley proofs.

HARRY ELMER BARNES.

Northampton, Mass.
September 1, 1929.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. CULTURAL CONTRASTS	3
I. IS RELIGION OUT OF DATE?	3
II. CULTURAL CONTRASTS	7
III. THE RELIGIOUS REVOLUTION OF TODAY	24
IV. WHO IS QUALIFIED TO DISCUSS THE RELIGIOUS PROBLEM?	29
V. THE "OLD STUFF" ARGUMENT	34
II. WHAT PRICE RELIGION	39
I. IS THE RELIGIOUS ISSUE AN ACADEMIC PROBLEM?	39
II. HOW GREAT ARE THE EVILS WHICH RELIGION IS ABLE TO ACCOMPLISH?	43
1. The Religious Attitude	43
2. Effect on Intellectual Life	45
3. Religion and Political Institutions	53
4. Religion and Law	68
5. Religion and Modern Business	74
6. The Menace of Religion to Sound Sexology	84
7. How Religion Affects Education	88
8. Religion and Journalism	94
9. Religion and Art	95
III. ORTHODOXY AS THE MOB POLICEMAN	99
III. HOW MANKIND GOT RELIGION	103
I. SOME DEFINITIONS	103
II. PHASES OF THE RELIGIOUS COMPLEX	106

CHAPTER PAGE

III. LEADING STAGES IN THE ORIGIN OF RELIGION 118
IV. THE CHRISTIAN EPIC 134

IV. GOD'S WORD 139
I. THE BIBLE THE FOUNDATION OF WESTERN RELIGIONS 139
II. THE ORTHODOX VIEW OF THE HOLY BIBLE 144
III. THE ESSENTIAL FACTS IN REGARD TO THE HEBREW AND CHRISTIAN BIBLE 149
IV. THE BIBLE AND MODERN LIFE . . . 181

V. THE FAITH OF OUR FATHERS LIVING STILL 189
I. THE ORTHODOX VIEW OF NATURE, GOD, MAN AND LIFE 189
II. LEADING CULTURAL FOSSILS IN ORTHODOXY 202
III. IS ORTHODOXY A MAN OF STRAW AND A BOGY OF THE SCEPTIC? 216

VI. BLASTING AT THE ROCK OF AGES . . . 231
I. ASPECTS OF MODERN KNOWLEDGE WHICH HAVE UNDERMINED TRADITIONAL RELIGION 231
II. THE CRUMBLING OF ORTHODOXY . . . 233
III. EXCAVATING THE FOSSILS OF RELIGIOUS ORTHODOXY 273

VII. SANCTUARY VERSUS LABORATORY . . 301
I. IS THE CONFLICT OF SCIENCE WITH RELIGION OR THEOLOGY? 301

APTER PAGE

II. CATHOLICISM AND SCIENCE 305
III. PROTESTANT FUNDAMENTALISM AND SCIENCE 325
IV. DEVOUT MODERNISM AND SCIENCE . . 329
V. ADVANCED MODERNISM AND THE SCIENTIFIC POINT OF VIEW 338
VI. MISCELLANEOUS GROUPS 349
VII. MODERN SCIENTISTS AS LIBERAL THEOLOGIANS 355

II. THE JESUS STEREOTYPE 373
I. THE IMPORTANCE OF THE JESUS QUESTION IN RELIGIOUS RECONSTRUCTION 373
II. WAS JESUS AN HISTORIC FIGURE? . . 390
III. THE MINISTRY OF JESUS IN MODERN PERSPECTIVE 404

X. RELIGION IN A SECULAR AGE 426
I. THE CASE FOR RELIGION IN THE MODERN WORLD 426
II. WHAT RELIGION MUST ABANDON TO COMMAND RESPECT AND CONFIDENCE TODAY 427
III. THE NEW PERSPECTIVE AND RELIGIOUS READJUSTMENT 436
IV. CHURCHES IN THE NEW RELIGIOUS AND CULTURAL ORDER 446
V. SHOULD WE REGRET THE PASSING OF THE OLD RELIGIOUS ORDER? . . . 453
VI. CONCLUSIONS 460

NDEX 465

THE TWILIGHT OF CHRISTIANITY

Chapter I

CULTURAL CONTRASTS

The outstanding sociological fact making for the persistence of religion is that of culture inertia. Institutions change but slowly and one aspect of culture may lag for centuries behind some other aspect until at last a readjustment is forced. It is amazing that primitive conceptions of the universe, developed some three thousand years ago in Arabia, are spoken with greater conviction than ever into a tiny microphone and sent winging their way into thousands of homes. The old order changes and gives place to the new but slowly.

(Clifford Kirkpatrick)

I. IS RELIGION OUT OF DATE?

The fact that the increasing hold of the scientific faith has tended to obscure belief, not only in the letter of the Christian tradition, but in the core of the older religious world-view as well, which the liberals tried vigorously to keep alive, must not be misunderstood. It does not mean that men have been led by science to feel less deeply the religious aspect of experience, or that they have come to place less emphasis on the reality and importance of the religious life. For some few men the new faith in science has been, to be sure, so absorbing that it has excluded all other interests. For them, the pursuit of truth has been sufficient unto itself, has been a genuine religious consecration. But every religion can show great thinkers for whom the vision of Truth has been central and supreme; in itself such a religion of science offers nothing new. The vast majority of those attracted to science, even when they have abandoned all supernaturalism, all belief in a cosmic companion or in human immortality, have not grown

thereby any the less religious. Indeed, one of the outstanding facts of recent years has been the increasing interest taken by scientific thought in religion. When religion was still identified with Christian orthodoxy, there was some excuse for hostility to it in the name of science. Now that careful investigation of the religious experience and history of man has made impossible any such provincialism, men are free to distinguish between the basic facts and reality of religion and all particular religious beliefs. Such beliefs, even so fundamental a one as belief in God, must stand their chances with the philosophic interpretation men give their experience. But the inescapable reality of religion itself, both as an individual experience and a social institution, has stood out all the more clearly. Nothing in the scientific faith has diminished its appeal; indeed, it has challenged wide interest as a most important field for scientific inquiry. The growth of the scientific faith has not made men irreligious; it has led them rather to new conceptions of the nature and function of religion in human life. If there has been an actual waning of interest in the religious life in the last few generations, that has come, not from science, not from the scientific faith, but from the competition of other interests in industrial society.

The above quotation from Randall's admirable recent book, *Religion in the Modern World*, expresses in excellent fashion the point of view which will dominate the conception and execution of the present work. We are in no sense engaged in a bitter assault upon religion. What we are endeavoring to do is to examine some of the leading issues of contemporary religion in the light of modern knowledge. As far as we are hostile to religious doctrines, such hostility is directed solely against those religious beliefs and practices which are clearly untenable in the light of modern knowledge. Whatever the place of religion in the future of human society, it is certain that there can be no good or defensible religion based upon bad facts, that is, founded on assumptions and premises that

cannot be squared with our contemporary scientific information. Indeed, it may be held that the most promising and reasonable method of rehabilitating religion is to be found in a straight-forward effort: (1) to subject present religious positions to the test of the best knowledge which we possess today; (2) to reject those aspects of belief which are clearly out of date; and (3) to present man with a religion which will not be an affront to his intelligence. Though what we shall have to say in the present book will severely challenge many of the most sacred tenets of our contemporaries, we feel that the ultimate result will be favorable to the construction of a religion really suitable for a twentieth century civilization.

Indeed, the present volume may be regarded as a friendly critique of religion. The author will be assailed by many scientists and critical philosophers for his amiable and receptive attitude in regard to the formulation and launching of a secular and socialized religion. In the religious controversy of the last few months he has frequently been subjected to severe criticism by those who believe that the time has come to dispense with religion entirely and to seek other and wholly secular types of social guidance and control. Mr. Joseph Lewis of the Free Thinkers Society has stated that our position on religion is so conservative as to be, for all practical purposes, reactionary. The writer does not assume to say that such critics are wrong in taking the position that they do. He merely desires to make clear at the outset his divergence from this extremely radical group. If moderate and forward-looking churchmen cannot receive the critique embodied in the present volume with good-will and complacency, then they have a hard future before them. They can scarcely expect more kindly and sympa-

thetic treatment from a scientifically-trained and secularly-minded investigator.

Some may accuse us of attempting to make too sharp a break with the past and of rejecting the old simply because of its association with the past. We are not interested in the question of the antiquity of opinions, but rather in their validity. If it is true that no idea should be rejected merely because it is old, it follows equally logically that we should not accord respect to any point of view, however venerable, unless it squares with the best knowledge now available. What we aim at in this volume is a searching examination of the religious complex of today and its assessment in the light of the relevant information now accessible to the alert student. While we need not expect to convince even all friendly readers of complete correctness or impeccable logic throughout, only those who object to being intellectually contemporaneous can well be offended by the general attitude maintained towards religion throughout this book. If we are accused of a lack of reverence, we may offer the cogent answer that a reverent attitude towards intellectual problems is incompatible with clarity of thought and sincerity of statement. Others will protest against a fearless analysis of so-called sacred subjects, but we may respond that the very conception of "sacred things" has been abandoned by all up-to-date students of human affairs. All of our institutions and beliefs have been man-made and, hence, are no more sacred than their makers. It can scarcely be regarded as blasphemous for well-informed twentieth-century writers to analyze with candor the intellectual products and social usages which their forefathers brought forth in centuries long past when human knowledge was far more meager and much less precise than it is today. There is not the slightest reason why

the cultural historian or the social scientist should not examine the origins and intellectual background of the theory of the Virgin Birth of Jesus with as much candor and complacency as he would the development of the spinning-wheel or the water-clock. The doctrine of the Virgin Birth is as much a human product as the spinning-wheel and, hence, not a whit more sacred. If the conception of a virgin birth appears as incompatible with the modern orientation as the spinning-wheel, we should be willing to abandon the former with as much complacency as we have the latter. We shall have occasion, however, later to examine into the reasons why it is far more difficult to abandon a religious anachronism than it is to relinquish the use of an outgrown item in our technological equipment.

II. CULTURAL CONTRASTS

The problem of religion in the modern world emerges as one very important aspect of the incongruous and lop-sided nature of contemporary civilization. The most striking fact about our present age is the remarkable discrepancy between our natural science, technology and industry, on the one hand, and our opinions and institutions, on the other. We have a thoroughly up-to-date material culture, while most of our opinions and institutions represent a strange evolutionary mosaic, embracing elements which date from the eighteenth century of the Christian era back to a period far earlier than the eighteenth century before Christ. Further, the development of our science and material culture has been exceedingly rapid in the last century. From the standpoint of scientific knowledge and material surroundings, the age of Thomas Jefferson is further removed from our own than it was from that of Ashurbanipal or Rameses II. Yet,

with respect to fundamental attitudes and opinions, it may well be doubted whether we have made any substantial gains since the Jeffersonian epoch. Many would, indeed, hold that Jefferson was a more enlightened man than Woodrow Wilson or Herbert Hoover. We may now examine in a little more detail these contrasts in our civilization, and consider how this situation presents the best framework for an intelligent study of the religious complex today.

Without doubt, by far the most striking and dramatic aspect of the recent history of man is that chapter associated with the progress of natural science and its application to human understanding and social problems. During the first half of the nineteenth century there is no doubt that the most notable developments in natural science were those connected with the history of the universe, the earth, the animals and man, namely, astronomy, geology, biology and archeology. The penetration into the magnitude and complexity of the cosmos was carried further through the progress in optics, which made possible larger and more adequate telescopes, and through the progress in spectrum analysis by Fraunhofer, Kirchoff and Bunsen. A conception of the magnitude of space and cosmic bodies was attained which made it much harder than before to entertain the geocentric outlook that alone gave *rationale* to the Christian Epic. In the seventeenth century Steno had discovered the nature and significance of fossils and in the next century Werner and Hutton established stratigraphical and historical geology. These anticipations of modern geology were carried forward and systematized in James Lyell's *Principles of Geology* (1830-33) which embodied a naturalistic view of the earth's development and proved that both the time element and the processes involved in earth history ren-

dered ridiculous the views expressed in *Genesis*. A number of scientific advances prepared the way for evolutionary biology. The classification of plants and animals by Linnæus indicated the tree-like relationships of *genera* and species. The descriptive work of men like Cuvier and Buffon was pregnant with suggestions as to development and relationships among the animals. Further descriptive material was assembled by explorers. Geology, by its study of fossil life, revealed the history of life development on the planet. Anatomy and physiology threw new light upon the processes of genetics. Malthus's writings on population emphasized the struggle for existence among men and animals. Lamarck, Wallace, Darwin and others assembled the data and suggestions thus provided and laid the foundations for the doctrine of biological evolution. The classic work in this stage of the development of biology was Darwin's *Origin of Species* (1859). Huxley, Haeckel, Romanes, Wallace and others elaborated the various arguments in favor of the evolutionary hypothesis. Herbert Spencer took the doctrine of evolution out of the narrow field of technical biology and made it a universal cultural conception, integral in the thinking of every civilized man today. At the same time that astronomy, geology and biology were undermining the Christian Epic from the standpoint of its scientific foundations, biblical criticism was discrediting the authenticity and authority of its literary basis.

While the developments in the physical sciences and chemistry were not as epoch-making and astonishing as they have been since 1850, the progress here was notable. MacLaurin, Euler, Bernoulli, d'Alembert and Lagrange had laid the mathematical basis for the physical researches later executed by James Clerk Maxwell and Willard Gibbs. Count Rumford opened the way for our

modern theories of heat. Rumford, Carnot, Mayer and Joule discovered the principle of the conservation of energy. Gaus, Ampère and Faraday started us on the road to our modern knowledge and applications of electricity. In chemistry the work of Priestly, Cavendish, Dalton, Davey, Liebig, Wöhler and others opened the way for the impressive discoveries in physical and organic chemistry in our own day.

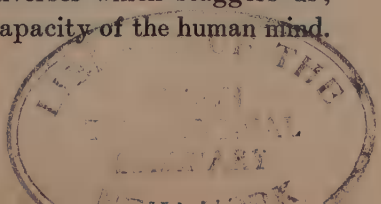
While recognizing the great debt of contemporary scientists to the slow and patient labors of the pioneers, from Copernicus and Galileo to Darwin and Helmholtz, it is no exaggeration to say that the scientific advances of the last half century have done more to extend our knowledge of the cosmos, physical nature, man and society than all the achievements of the human intellect down to the year 1875. Within the last half-century the progress of science has become ever more amazing in its implications in proportion as we approach the present day. The advances in this field of human endeavor appear to be moving on with continually accelerated speed and with ever more widely radiating lines of influence.

Of the first order should be listed certain fundamental and general conceptions regarding scientific research and discoveries, such as the emphasis by Charles Peirce and others upon the fact that the hypothesis of basic, uniform and invariable laws of science may well be nothing more than convenient human formulations of no general cosmic validity. Contemporary physics tends to reinforce this view. The whole set of categories and concepts used by the scientists are man-made, and, hence, embody the limitations of their architects. This fact cannot, however, be used by the religionist as a basis for criticizing the pretensions of science, because the categories and concepts of religion are, likewise, the product of the human imagin-

ation. Moreover, they are, for the most part, drawn from a much earlier and less informed stage of human thought than the assumptions of scientific methodology. Next should be mentioned the much-discussed contentions of Einstein, who has modified the Newtonian conception of gravitation and of the path of light and heavenly bodies, has suggested that energy is the ultimate fact of the physical universe, and has worked out a mathematical synthesis of the principles of thermodynamics, electrodynamics and gravitation. This body of *relativity* doctrine suggests, indeed, that both time and space are but convenient human illusions, which are in reality manifestations of energy.

In applying scientific methods to the exploration of the physical universe of universes the most stupendous discovery has been that of cosmic evolution, a notion dimly perceived on the basis of very imperfect data by Heraclitus in the pre-Aristotelian days in Greece. The whole cosmos appears to be involved in a vast scheme of change, in part development and in part disintegration. There is nothing static in the cosmos, and the only constant of nature seems, paradoxically enough, to be the laws and processes of transformation. This fact shows at one glance the futility of the quest of metaphysicians from Socrates to Kant, Royce and Hocking for immutable and transcendental verities.

Next to the fact of cosmic evolution and universal dynamics should be placed the discovery and growing appreciation of the infinite extent and complexity of the cosmos. The provision of improved astronomical instruments and aids, such as the spectroscope, interferometer, giant telescopes and celestial photography, have revealed to us a cosmic universe of universes which staggers us; indeed, wholly transcends the capacity of the human mind.



Single stars have been found, the diameter of which is greater than the whole orbit of Mars about the sun. The new 200-inch telescope now being constructed for use in California will, it is hoped, reveal stars at a distance of a billion light-years, meaning nothing less than that we shall be able to detect stars whose light, travelling at the rate of six trillion miles a year, would require a billion years to reach the earth. Indeed, for the more ambitious types of celestial exploration the light-year of six trillion miles has been abandoned and in its place we have the *parsec* of nineteen million million miles. The inadequacy of conventional religious assumptions and categories is at once made apparent when we remember that such concepts were evolved in an age which conceived of the cosmos as a small part of the present earth covered with an inverted blue bowl a few miles distant.

At the opposite extreme from the survey of the indescribably extensive "heavens," but equally impressive stand the recent physical researches into the nature of matter. Physicists and physical chemists have resolved the "integral" atom into a physical universe, far more complicated than our solar system, with scores of electronic orbits within each atom, along which electrons move with the speed of light, giving off energy as they leap from one orbit to another. Even this conception of the atom elaborated by Dr. Bohr has recently been challenged by Schrödinger and others as over simplifying the processes which go on within it.

The scientific discoveries in regard to living matter are quite as remarkable as the achievements of research in exploring the physical universe. Modern biology has shown the basic unity and cellular nature of organic matter, has thoroughly established the fact of organic evolution as the explanation of the genesis and present

status of organic life on our planet, and has revealed to us the infinitely complex but law-abiding mechanisms and processes of heredity. Working in collaboration with chemistry, it has further elaborated and illuminated the great fact of the chemical cycle of life first uncovered by Lavoisier. Organic chemistry has enabled us to reconstruct and manufacture a great variety of invaluable commodities. It requires two pages of relatively fine print to enumerate the chemical derivatives from cotton seed, running from smokeless powder to salad oil, washing powder and artificial rubber. Physiology, acting in coöperation with chemistry, has recently made penetrating researches into the whole problem of the chemical nature of life and death. Investigating the absorbing new field of the glands of internal secretion, it has shown the basic chemical control of metabolism (the processes by which the dead food is built up into living matter and the living matter is broken down into simpler products within a cell or organism), of the development of the brain, of the determination of sex and of the direction and control of the emotions.

Psychology, founded upon physiology, neurology and sound methods of investigation, has made remarkable strides in giving us a firm and naturalistic grasp upon the problems of human behavior. It has established the fundamental physico-chemical relationship between mind and body and has completely discredited the older spiritistic interpretations. It has thoroughly uprooted the older version of innate ideas and has shown that our whole set of reaction-patterns in life are the product of the conditioned-responses built up through our life experiences. It has revealed the great importance of the unconscious in mental life and emotional response, though it has divested the unconscious of any element of mystery or

mystification. One of the most interesting phases of the advance of psychology has been its explanation of such hitherto mystical concepts as the dependence upon God, religious conversion and the sense of sin. Today psychology is an even more deadly challenge to the older orthodoxy than the new cosmology and the new evolutionary doctrine. Its attack upon conventional religion is, indeed, much more immediate, intimate and vital.

Finally, human society is no longer left as a field to be explained and directed on the basis of our traditional heritage and ancient theological dogmas. History reveals the manner in which we have come to live as we do today, explaining not only the origins and growth of our institutions but also the evolution of those human ideas and conceptions which have furnished the rationalized explanation and defense of such institutions. We are making ever greater progress in the scientific study of social institutions and behavior, with the end in view of freeing them from the domination of the superstitions of the past, of bringing them into much greater compatibility with facts of man's nature and needs, and of utilizing them ever more effectively in producing a more happy and complete life here on earth.

The findings of natural science have been applied to industry and transportation in such manner as to constitute a veritable "Industrial Revolution." The old spinning-wheel and hand-loom have been replaced by modern textile machinery. The water-wheel has been supplemented by the steam-engine, the internal combustion engine and the electric motor. Modern chemistry has enabled us to revolutionize the iron and steel industries and other aspects of the production of building and construction materials. Chemistry has also been basic in the development of the modern petroleum and rubber industries

and has collaborated with physics in providing contemporary methods of illumination. By itself alone chemistry has created important industries in the way of the manufacture of dyes and of various by-products and derivatives from cotton-seed, coal tar, maize and the like. The new industry called forth better methods of transportation, and today we have improved highways, canals, railroads, steamships, automobiles and aeroplanes. Industry and transportation require more rapid methods of communicating information than were available for the use of our ancestors. The telegraph, telephone, ocean cables, wireless telegraphy, and the radio have followed in succession in less than a century and have almost eliminated considerations of time and place from the communication of information. Industry and commerce have created a new urban age in the place of the older agrarian order which had held sway since the dawn of written history. Urban life has given us our slum areas, sky-scrapers, subways and the socio-psychological problems which go with them. Modern industry has made necessary a more adequate method of applying and disciplining labor, and the factory system has come into being to replace the older methods of controlling labor through the family, guild and putting-out systems. The modern factory has confined the great roving simian, *homo sapiens*, in an industrial cage with results the nature of which cannot at the present time be fully foretold. In the above ways, and many others which we have been unable to mention, contemporary science and technology have conspired together completely to change the face of our civilization.

At the same time, our opinions and institutions have altered but slightly in a century. Any person who was a member of the Constitutional Convention in 1787 would be completely amazed and absolutely at sea when faced

by our modern material culture, but he could discuss economics, politics, education and religion with a contemporary American citizen in terms which would be equally familiar to each of them. Indeed, the average member of the Constitutional Convention of 1787 would be viewed suspiciously as rather radical by the typical member of the Republican National Committee in 1929. Imagine, for example, our Revolutionary Fathers like Thomas Jefferson or Patrick Henry carrying on a Socratic dialogue on the principles of human liberty and good citizenship with Solomon Stanwood Menken or Ralph Easley!

In contrasting our material culture with the mental life of Americans today it is useful at the outset to emphasize the fact that the intellectual outlook of the masses remains much the same as it was in primitive times. Anthropologists have described the primitive mind as characterized chiefly by an all-pervading supernaturalism, lack of precise and logical thinking, credulity and an ignorance of scientific methods and results. Judged by these standards, it is obvious that the great majority of Americans are still overwhelmingly primitive in their ways of thinking. Still further, much of the specific content of earlier superstitions has come down into the modern era. Professor A. M. Tozzer of Harvard University published some years ago an admirable book on primitive culture, entitled *Social Origins and Social Continuities*. As an appendix he included an exhibit of the perpetuation of ancient superstitions in the themes submitted by Harvard freshmen to the Department of English. He was able to make clear the striking similarity between the mental attitudes of primitive men and Harvard freshmen. There was a remarkable persistence of the primitive belief in luck, chance and other pre-scientific attitudes and devices.

We may now consider more specificially the archaic nature of the prevailing opinions and institutions in contemporary society. Our political opinions and institutions represent a mosaic compounded of: (1) the veneration of the state derived from the Oriental emperor worship; (2) Roman legalism and the conception of secular omnipotence; (3) the Classical obsession with the merits of monarchy, aristocracy and democracy; (4) archaic views of representative government which developed between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries; (5) seventeenth and eighteenth century doctrines of natural rights; and (6) the eighteenth century view of the perfectability of man, linked up with the nineteenth century enthusiasm for democracy. While there is plenty of dynamic and vital political doctrine expounded by up-to-date thinkers in the field, this has found but slight adoption in practice and there has been singularly little effort to adapt our political institutions to the needs of an urban industrial age. We in America continue to revere a constitution and a political system which was created in a simple agricultural society, in spite of the fact that material culture in America has been altered more in the last century than in the previous millenium.

Law, likewise, is founded upon ancient theories and practices. It is still based primarily upon oriental usages and conceptions, the formulations of the Roman jurists and the precedents of the English Common Law. Very little progress indeed has been made in the way of introducing the historical and sociological point of view in the reconstruction of juristic theory and practice in America. We attempt to regulate a twentieth century civilization by applying to it concepts and methods that have changed but little since the year 1700. The rules of legal evidence are hopelessly out of date and confused. In many ways

they are almost exactly the opposite of the principles and processes applied in the field of scientific evidence, which is designed to ascertain the actual truth in regard to some specific problem. The attitude taken by the courts towards crime and criminal responsibility is a composite of archaic legalism, religious superstition and metaphysical illusions. With the exception of certain advanced work in juvenile courts, there is not the slightest recognition of the modern socio-psychological conception of human conduct and its relation to the causation of crime. Even in the field of insanity, where the conventional legal conception of the free moral agent is in part suspended, the test for insanity is strictly legal and not medical. In a recent notorious case in Ohio—that of Mr. Remus—we witnessed the amusing spectacle of a group of learned and logical physicians branding the defendant as legally sane but medically quite irresponsible.

Our attitudes and usages with respect to property are equally full of primitive vestiges. The notion of the unique sanctity of property is in part an outgrowth of primitive mysticism and superstition. Our contemporary view of property rights is a compound of ancient legalism and the prevailing sixteenth and seventeenth century Protestant views of God's approval of thrift and profit. To these have been added the seventeenth and eighteenth century notion that the chief purpose of the state and legal institutions is to protect private property. Nothing more modern than this is necessary to explain the majority decisions of the Supreme Court of the United States on matters pertaining to private property in the twentieth century. Critical writers have subjected the whole conventional theory of property to searching reexamination, but their views have been for the most part ignored. When they have been recognized they have been

bitterly attacked as un-American, Bolshevistic and the like. There is little or nothing in American conceptions of property rights which cannot be discovered explicitly or implicitly in the writings of John Locke.

We have been especially reluctant to bring the control of sex and the family into harmony with contemporary scientific and æsthetic considerations. Our sex mores and family institutions embody: (1) primitive reaction to the mystery of sex and of women in particular; (2) Hebraic uxoriousness and conceptions of patriarchal maledomination; (3) patristic and medieval views regarding the baseness of sex and of sex temptation, especially as offered by women; (4) the medieval esteem for virginity in women; (5) the sacramental view of marriage, which leads us to regard marriage as a theological rather than a social issue; (6) the property views of the early *bourgeoisie;* and (7) the Kantian rationalization of personal inadequacy and inexperience. There is not a single item in the sex mores of a conventionally respectable American today which squares with either science or æsthetics.

Our educational system has changed but little as compared with the vast alteration of our ways of living. Certain basic strains in our educational doctrine are derived from the oriental and medieval notion that the chief purpose of education is to make clear the will of the gods or of God to man. From the Greeks and Romans came the high esteem for training in rhetoric and argumentation as the prime essential of a successful career in politics. Humanism contributed the view that the classical languages embodied the flower of secular learning and represented the most exquisite form of literary expression. The democratic obsession of the last century supported the idea that everybody is entitled to participate in a complete system of education, and that educational oppor-

tunities should be equal for all. The punitive psychology, which still dominates the greater part of our educational procedure, was derived from the Christian philosophy of solemnity and the exacting discipline of the will. Education in the natural and social sciences and in technology has not been regarded as relatively important or respectable, and occupies nothing like as great a part in our educational system as the older currents in our curriculum. As Professor Kallen has observed, education today is more of a distraction from life than a preparation for it. Few of the real problems involved in living intelligently and successfully in an urban and industrial society are touched upon vitally in our educational system from the kindergarten to the graduate school. Nor has there been much effort to work over our educational methods in harmony with the modern psychological demonstration that vivid personal interest is the only sensible basis of a dynamic educational scheme.

Journalism has not as yet achieved any considerable success as a method of informing the public with respect to contemporary issues and providing general educational direction as to the problems of modern life. It still remains chiefly a method of providing for the wholesale dissemination of the old brand of neighborhood gossip in an age when the neighborhood has disappeared and face-to-face gossiping has become ever more inadequate and impossible. The same subjects which made juicy gossip in the pre-newspaper days still constitute the best copy for the contemporary newspapers. Personalities are much more highly esteemed than principles by the modern journal. No scientific discovery of modern times, no engineering achievement of our age nor any social reform program enunciated in our day has received the same publicity as was bestowed upon the notorious murder trial

of Ruth Snyder and Judd Grey. No newspaper which has made a serious effort to devote itself primarily to public education on vital topics of economic, political and sociological import has been able to survive.

It is scarcely necessary to point out that religion is the most archaic element in our culture and the one which has been most reluctant to take cognizance of contemporary developements in knowledge and life. The Fundamentalists today, among whom are numbered the majority of religious communicants, live under the domination of the same intellectual patterns as prevailed in primitive times. Mr. Bryan openly declared at the Dayton trial in 1925 that no statement whatever would appear to him preposterous or unsupportable, provided it be found in Holy Writ. Even the great majority of liberal theologians today are in rebellion against seventeenth and eighteenth century religious, scientific and philosophical views. It is probably no exaggeration to hold that not one per cent. of modern theologians are really adjusted to contemporary knowledge and ways of thinking. At best the great majority of them are merely attempting to express archaic views in contemporaneous types of phraseology. Religion is slower in readjusting itself to new ways of living and thinking than any other phase of human culture. This fact was admirably demonstrated by the study of the relative change of opinions and attitudes in American culture since 1890 embodied in Mr. and Mrs. Lynd's important book, *Middletown*. Even more, religion is probably the leading influence promoting cultural lag in other fields of human opinion and activity. It is the primary intellectual factor which discourages a candid and secular approach to the reconstruction of human knowledge and social conduct in every field.

Not only is there a marked contrast between the degree

and rapidity of contemporary advances in the field of science and material culture on the one hand and of opinions and institutions on the other; there is also a marked difference of attitude with respect to antiques in our material surroundings and antiques among our ideas. As far as our means will allow, we desire to be strictly up-to-date in everything which is a manifestation of our material equipment. We demand the latest and most perfect bathroom equipment and the most up-to-date radio installation. Any American of even moderate means would be indescribably humiliated if compelled to own and operate an automobile five years out of date. Yet this same person, who demands a thoroughly contemporaneous vehicle in which to transport his body, will probably boast that his mind is furnished with information and opinions the great majority of which antedate the year 1800. Indeed, very few respectable opinions held by contemporary Americans have an origin as recent as the middle of the nineteenth century. Another phase of this differential attitude of humanity toward material cultural, as compared to opinions and social institutions, relates to the reaction towards expert guidance. When a man desires to have a bathroom faucet repaired, a spark-plug replaced in his car or a tooth pulled he at once deems it necessary to have recourse to a trained expert in these lines of endeavor. Yet, with respect to the much more difficult and complicated problems of social, economic and political theory and practice, he is prepared to rest completely satisfied with the opinions of the man on the street.

The greatest danger which faces contemporary civilization is this alarming discrepancy between our natural science and technology on the one hand and our opinions and social institutions on the other. Modern civilization is like a man with one foot strapped to an ox-cart and

the other to an aëroplane. This sort of situation cannot continue indefinitely. Unless we are able to bridge the gulf and bring our thinking and institutions up-to-date, the ultimate collapse of civilization is inevitable. At present, far from closing this gap, the tendency is for the divergence to become ever more extensive and notable. Our technology is progressing with dizzy speed, making more remarkable strides each year than ever before. At the same time, the forces of conservatism, which endeavor to obstruct the progress in opinions and institutions, seem to be getting stronger day by day. The outlook, then, is one which is far from being conducive to easy-going optimism.

The above discussion enables us to comment intelligently upon the frequent assertion that we are living in a scientific age. The fact is, of course, that we are not doing anything of the sort. We are living in an era in which our opinions and institutions are overwhelmingly the product of contributions from the pre-scientific era. Our age is one in which our civilization has been profoundly affected in certain respects by scientific discoveries and their application to our material culture. In this way mankind, while still remaining primarily pre-scientific in its thinking and life interests, has been able to appropriate the results of the investigations and achievements of a few scientifically-minded pioneers. It can probably be stated with complete accuracy that less than five thousand individuals have been responsible for those changes in our material civilization which separate us from the days of Franklin, Washington and Jefferson. Modern civilization is essentially a venerable parasite unintelligently exploiting the products of contemporary science and technology.

Very often those who most greedily accept and enjoy

the products of modern science and technology are engaged in bitter attacks upon science as a whole and upon the scientific approach to life. Not infrequently persons who are most exacting in their demands for the most recent provisions in plumbing, the best medical attention, the most efficient and up-to-date automobiles and the like, are found at the same time defending classical or medieval civilization as the ideal period of human development. Many a plutocrat riding about in a Rolls-Royce car is at the same time disporting an intellect which could be matched in every respect by the mental equipment of a cave-dweller in the late Paleolithic period. In short, the real problem facing modern civilization is to make this actually a scientific age, namely, one in which we would not only insist upon contemporaneous bathtubs but also upon intellectual attitudes and assumptions harmonious with up-to-date plumbing. In a truly scientific age a man would be as much humiliated and disgraced to defend the literal inspiration of the Bible or to oppose birth-control as he would be today if he were compelled to travel daily down Fifth Avenue, New York, in an ox-cart or to use stone implements in consuming his soup at a metropolitan banquet.

III. THE RELIGIOUS REVOLUTION OF TODAY

However little stirred the Fundamentalists may be by the discoveries of modern natural science and the positions taken by social scientists, yet it remains true that the twentieth century will prove a critical epoch in the history of organized religion. Some alert writers have compared the present period with the first centuries of the Roman Empire as an age of the dissolution of ancient faiths and the development of new forms of religious doctrines. It is doubtful if this comparison will hold good

in any comprehensive fashion, as the present era presents a challenge to religion far more sweeping and serious than anything which transpired in the classical age. The novel religious situation which arose in the Mediterranean world at the close of the Roman republic represented merely a challenge to some of the existing religions or attested to the decay of certain older faiths. That revolution was not in any sense whatever a challenge to supernatural religion itself, for the dying religions were replaced by others as pregnant with superstitution and supernaturalism as were the religions of ancient Greece or of early agricultural Rome.

Today the situation is far different. We are now in possession of a body of knowledge and a resulting set of intellectual and social attitudes which offer a complete challenge, not merely to orthodox Catholicism or Fundamentalist Protestantism but to supernatural religions of every sort whatsoever. There has never been any religious crisis of this kind before, and any attempt at exact comparisons with the past are here bound to be misleading and distorting. Even the extreme assailants of pagan religions, like Lucretius, had no such basis for the critical attitude as the contemporary sceptic. The bitter attack of Lucretius upon supernatural religion was based mainly upon assumptions and intuitions, as incapable of proof at the time as were the most extreme pietistic views of his age. Today the situation has been profoundly altered. Contemporary science, especially astro-physics, renders the whole set of assumptions underlying the anthropomorphic and geocentric supernaturalism of the past absolutely archaic and preposterous. Our scientific knowledge has undermined the most precious tales in the holy books of all peoples. The development of biblical criticism has discredited the dogma of the direct revelation and

unique nature of the Hebrew Bible. Textual scholarship has been equally devastating to the sacred scriptures which form the literary basis of the other world religions.

It avails one nothing to deny these things, for they are actually undeniable. We must face the implied intellectual revolution honestly and see what is to be done about it. Nor does it suffice to get angry at a writer who brings forward these truths, so unpleasant to many of a pious turn of mind. No individual writer is to blame for these changes. If one becomes indignant over the intellectual progress of the last half century he must logically vent his anger comprehensively against the combined force of the natural scientists, cultural historians, textual critics and social scientists of the age.

In his *Religious Revolution of Today*, Professor James T. Shotwell has given us a forceful statement of the necessity for intellectual candor and courage, if we are to hope to be able to understand the nature of the religious revolution of today and discover the psychic and social readjustments which this great transition will necessitate:[1]—

> And yet the religious revolution is a fact. It is a fact which does not rest upon any weak assertion of mine. It is asserted by the very structure of society, by the current of its thought and the push of its tremendous movement, by the creations of that scientific spirit which is now stretching out the control of our bodies to conquer the forces of nature, and of our minds to grasp its hidden problems. And back of the religious revolution lies the tremendous process of social evolution, of emancipation from superstition and the awakening of reason. Society, as I have said before, is "carving out for itself, from the realm of mystery in which it lies, a sphere of unhampered action and a field of independent thought. . . .
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> It is possible that the revolution which we are analyzing

[1] Shotwell, *op. cit.*, pp. 59, 110-111, 117-119.

may offer for the onward march some such inspiration out of the very heart of its destructive forces.

One thing is sure, that inspiration must be found there or not at all. It must be armed with the strength of the conqueror, not with the mere protest of defeat. There is no salvation in that sickly obscurantism which attempts to evade realities by confusing itself about them. Safety lies only in clarity and the struggle for the light. No sublimal nor fringe of consciousness can rank in the intellectual life beside the burning focal center where the rays of knowledge converge. The hope must lie in following reason, not in thwarting it. To turn back from it is not mysticism; it is superstition. No; we must be prepared to see the higher criticism destroy the historicity of the most sacred texts of the Bible, psychology analyze the phenomena of conversion on the basis of adolescent passion, anthropology explain the genesis of the very idea of God. And where we *can* understand, it is a moral crime to cherish the un-understood . . .

It is time to close, and yet we have just begun the consideration of that element of our problem which is of most vital interest to us. The past which held its meaning, and the outer world which reveals it, have kept us too long from ourselves. We must leave for another time and circumstance the application of our investigations in the world of today. But we have already seen that this revolutionary era in religion, as in science, is no temporary phase of the history of thought. The ground which has been won will not yield to the forces of superstition under any disguise of orthodoxy; it is secure for all future time, because the life of civilization has established itself upon them. The gains of Hellenic genius were almost entirely in the realm of thought and art—in the realm of poetry, and not of the practical life. Those of Judea were, if anything, more unpractical still. In fact, practicality has borne a stigma through all the pre-scientific age. It is now the strength of our intellectual emancipation. For the comforts of the body as well as of the mind are to be found in the new régime, and no blind barbarism is able to withstand this double appeal. Science controls as well as studies disease, prevents the dangers its vigilance discloses, and stands like a warder along the frontiers of experience. It is increasing the store

of wealth, and now calling for a higher justice in its distribution. Armed with such powers, it is invincible; the pre-scientific era can no more return than the pre-historic. We left our cave shelters of the frozen past many thousand years ago, built our cities, and spread out our nations; but until yesterday—and even now—the mind has kept reverting to those hidden channels where it groped in blindness and marked its spells of magic on the subterranean walls. It does so still whenever it has a chance, *but the chances are lessening.* It is too much to say that the reign of reason is at hand, for most of us are still primitive through and through; but it is not too much to say that the irrational is henceforth doomed to yield up the command of the motive forces of conscious conduct.

The achievements of the intellect have been greater than most people suspect. Its scope is not to be measured by any single discoveries in science or philosophy, but in the general movement towards rational control. Evolution brings emancipation; it offers life the poise that secures judgment upon its actions and dreams, instead of the blind, quick satiation of emotion. The reason is working out a vaster science than we dream of—a *scientia scientiarum* which is not metaphysics or theology, but simply the great science of living. This is not a new creation, for it is as old as thought, but it has only now won its way to the position of control. It does not ignore those old crude impressions which lie behind its intellectual creations. It recognizes the emotions which are stung into being along the quivering nerves, just as definitely as the thoughts which follow. But it knows where to place such phenomena and how to interpret them.

Finally, nothing that is fundamental in our experience is lost. Indeed, since we now see the mystery in life itself which we used to find in death, as long as life endures the tremulous note of reverence will sound across the still, clear spaces of the mind. But the tone from that eternal thrill will be moulded, under the control of reason, into other forms than that fantastic, barbaric, and discordant theme which has held, and still so largely holds, the drama of our ancient myths—and our theologies.

IV. WHO IS ENTITLED TO DISCUSS THE RELIGIOUS PROBLEM?

The question of who has a legitimate right to discuss the problem of religion has led to considerable controversy. The fact that there could be any controversy on this subject is in itself a product of modern intellectual developments. Down to our generation there could be no question as to whose province it was to deal with the problem of religion. Religion was viewed as man's relationship to the supernatural world and the specialists in supernaturalism were therefore the experts in religion, namely, the priests and theologians. Religion was not looked upon as a phase of human behavior, growing out of man's inherent make-up, his relationship with his fellow beings and his experiences with the external world. It was regarded as a unique phase of experience due to the influence of the spirit world, and in no way resting upon naturalistic foundations. As long as one granted these basic premises the tendency of theology to monopolize all discussion of religion could be legitimately defended, and there was real justification for the charge of ignorance when others than theologians assumed to deal with religious issues.

The developments in psychology, anthropology, history and the social sciences in the last fifty years have completely reversed this older attitude toward the origin and nature of religion and have produced a comparable revolution with respect to the proper methods of approaching and analyzing religious issues. It has been thoroughly demonstrated that religion is a purely secular human product—as much so as man's economic ideas and practices. Religious doctrines and usages have been developed

by man rather than being revealed by God and applied and developed under his direction. Religion is now looked upon by all reputable students of the problem as an aspect of human behavior. There is nothing uniquely mysterious about it. However much religion may in the past have been concerned with the so-called supernatural world, there is not the slightest evidence of the operation of actual supernatural factors in the origin and development of religion. If this is the case, then religion can be intelligently studied only by representatives of the various techniques competent to analyze human behavior, namely, students of chemistry, physiology, psychology, anthropology, history, sociology and the other social sciences. We must study religious conduct in exactly the same manner as we would any other phase of human behavior. This is a point of view which was insisted upon as early as the middle of the eighteenth century by such writers as David Hume. We are today, however, in a far better position to demonstrate the accuracy of Hume's contention and much more thoroughly equipped to follow out his suggestion.

We may, therefore, contend that the study of religion falls exclusively within the province of the social sciences and various auxiliary fields. This point of view carries with it the implication that there is no legitimate place for the theologian in the modern intellectual perspective. The premises of the old supernaturalism have completely evaporated and this has carried with it the disappearance of all justification for the function of the theologian as the specialist in the field of the supernatural relationships supposed to exist between God and man. Even though he were to retain his title of theologian, such a person could only investigate religion intelligently as a student of human behavior, namely, as a psychologist and a social

scientist. He could not justify his independent existence, because it would involve a useless and indefensible duplication of effort. In short, the intelligent student of religion in the future must prepare himself in psychology and the social sciences and rest content with being a specialist devoted to the application of these techniques to the investigation and elucidation of religious behavior. There can be no place whatever for the independent theologian even in the field of attempting to assess the significance of religious values. Any endeavor to estimate the value of religion in society would be the legitimate function solely of the social philosopher. Therefore, contemporaneously minded and adequately equipped students have a ready and effective reply to the charge of ursurpation, intrusion and ignorance when psychologists and social scientists endeavor to study religion. They may logically assert that the theologian must be denied any legitimate right even to professional existence, in the light of our well-established modern position with respect to the nature of religion. Francis Bacon's indictment of the Scholastic philosophers as "tumbling up and down" in their own reasons and conceits instead of studying the world about them might be applied with some justice to not a few present-day theologians.

During the controversy of the recent months the writer received an amiable letter from one of the leaders of Devout Modernism in the United States. He suggested good-naturedly that we get together, so that he might teach the writer some religion and might at the same time learn more about sociology from him. The writer answered with equal affability that such a meeting would be highly agreeable, but suggested that the learning process should probably be reversed. There was little doubt that this theologian could have learned more about religion than

about sociology from the writer, while it is equally certain that this distinguished and experienced preacher could have taught the writer more about sociology than about religion.

The chief quarrel over the province of the study of religion in recent years has been between the theologian on the one hand and the psychologists and social scientists on the other. There has, however, been an innovation, namely, the pretensions of certain natural scientists to competence to deal with religion. This tendency has appeared in the volunteer services of several natural scientists in the guise of liberal theologians. The most notable of these have been J. Arthur Thomson, Sir Oliver Lodge, A. N. Whitehead, A. S. Eddington, Robert A. Millikan, Henry Fairfield Osborn, Michael I. Pupin and Kirtley F. Mather. Certain upholders of the faith have taken renewed confidence and assurance from the fact that some of the above natural scientists have stood forth as valiant defenders of religion and have declared that there is no conflict between science and religion. Religionists have, on this account, pointed with contempt to psychologists and social scientists as "small fish" in the scientific field, when compared to Millikan, Pupin and Osborn. Hence, they have marvelled at the presumption of the social scientists in differing with these distinguished natural scientists in regard to the religious issue. The question, however, is not the one of who is a big fish and who is a small fish in the field of physics or astronomy, but rather who is best fitted by training and study to deal with the problem of religion. It is evident, without argument, that the psychologist and the social scientist are far better equipped to handle the religious problem than the most eminent physicist or chemist living, provided the latter has not also acquired a complete command of those aspects

of social science which are essential to the intelligent study of religion. One thorough course in anthropology or sociology would be more valuable in preparing a person to approach the religious problem than the precise mastery of the entire field of physics, a feat no longer possible for any single individual. We will be the first to concede that the training and information possessed by a distinguished astronomer should be an admirable background for the subsequent study of religion, but no amount of knowledge in the natural sciences will of itself entitle a person to speak with any authority whatsoever upon the nature and validity of religion. It is as presumptuous for a physicist, who has not made a profound study of psychology, anthropology, history, and sociology, to utter dicta about religion as it would be for a sociologist who had never heard of the second law of thermodynamics to talk conclusively about physics or cosmology. A Pupin has no more right to feel competent to settle the religious problem than a Giddings would have to speak the last word on the validity of Einstein's most complicated equations. We do not contend for a moment that the above-mentioned natural scientists could not acquire competence to deal with the religious problem if they chose to make the attempt, but thus far not one of them has presented the slightest evidence of acquaintance with the indispensable training in psychology and the social sciences.

Another very important point to emphasize right here is that, after all, arguments do not derive their validity primarily from the repute of the author but rather depend finally upon their inherent validity. Hence, the futility of attempting to dismiss annoying truths and irritating statements, by the time-worn device of evasive pedantry in declaring that the person in question is not a "scholar" or "an expert in the field." Such charges are

usually groundless, but even if formally valid they would constitute no answer whatever to the arguments advanced. A Joseph Wheless may not be a Julius Wellhausen in biblical scholarship, but a sound argument by Wheless against the Fundamentalist view of God's word is just as valid as the similar view when set forth by a Bacon, Cheyne or Harnack. The expert "gag" or barrage in controversy is a last refuge of the person incapable of honest and straight-forward argumentation.

V. THE "OLD STUFF" ARGUMENT

It will doubtless be a splendid thing in this place to comment decisively and unequivocally upon one very prevalent but extremely disingenuous method of dealing with the critical attack upon orthodox religion, namely, to declare that it is all "old stuff," that it is generally accepted by all up-to-date theologians, that the attack is entirely unfair to the religious cause, and that there are really no more orthodox believers. The writer recognizes that the attack on orthodoxy goes back as far as the Egyptian emperor, Ikhnaton, about fifteen hundred years before Christ, if not earlier. He is not unaware of the attack upon orthodoxy by the Sophists and by Lucretius and the Epicureans. Further, he has made a special study of the assaults on orthodoxy by the Deists and other liberal theologians from 1650 to 1800. He is well aware of the heterodoxy of the Fathers of the Constitutional period in our own country. He is fully conscious, finally, that all he has stated in the recent controversy has been the common property of scientific students of religion for a generation.

All this is, however, quite a different thing from admitting that orthodoxy has no appreciable following in

the country today and that to attack orthodoxy is to attack a bogy and a man of straw. The writer may offer the following in support of the thesis that this particular rejoinder to criticism is made in bad faith. During the last few months he has probably received as extensive a number of representative letters on religion as any other person in the history of religious controversy in a similar period and he has been able to peruse a vast number of comments on the controversy in the press throughout the country. Now if his statements are to be condemned as "old stuff" and an irrelevant attack upon a non-extant body of belief, it is quite evident that those who would have the best reason for complaint on this ground would be the advanced religious thinkers of America—those who have passed farthest from orthodoxy. Yet, so far as the writer is aware, there has not been a single complaint upon this ground by the leaders of advanced religious thought in America. In sermons, letters, or the public prints the writer's stand has been commended as both timely and generally sound by such men as John H. Dietrich, Albert C. Dieffenbach, A. Wakefield Slaten, John Haynes Holmes, Alson H. Robinson, Karl Reiland, John Herman Randall, William Montgomery Brown, Archdeacon Humphries, Minot Simons, Henry Darlington, Charles Francis Potter and Rabbi Feinberg, to mention only a few representative names. On the other hand, those who have raised the "old stuff" dust have invariably been such wabbly Modernists as William Adams Brown, H. E. Luccock, Ralph Sockman, Henry N. Wieman, *et al.*

Now we do not for a moment contend that the supporters of the writer's general position are right and flaunters of the "old stuff" slogan are wrong in their theology. It is merely submitted that, if there were anything valid about the "old stuff" argument, the real lead-

ers of the most advanced religious thought in America would be those who would be exploiting this position. The writer contends that the tendency to cry "old stuff" is an evasive method whereby conservative Modernists hope to stem the tide of thoroughgoing criticism while offering to the public a gesture of pseudo-Modernism. As a proof that this attitude of the writer is neither unique nor wholly personal, he may refer the reader to the following editorial written by Dr. Albert C. Dieffenbach in the *Christian Register* for May 2, 1929:

Since Christmas-time, Professor Barnes has been pursued by the blasts of rhetorical indignation for daring to question the tenets of conventional Christendom. He denies the four-thousand-year-old concept of a perfect providential God. With our limited understanding we cannot comprehend the immensity of the astro-physical universe, much less the power behind it. It is preposterous for any man to affirm that he walks with such a God as a familiar friend, as some of our perfectly certain neighbors do in the sacred purlieus of present-day orthodoxy.

We need a new concept. There is nothing surer than that. But even the best of the so-called modernists do not dare to admit it; and as for their treatment of Professor Barnes, they thunder noisily against him but do not offer a single argument to refute him, or, which is more important, to clear the situation. Our sympathy goes entirely to such as Barnes for the audacity to face the perils of adventure in religion. Ours not first to ask what he offers for the content of a new theology. That may be right, it may be wrong. He deserves all our backing for exploring, and for reporting. On the other hand, there is nothing so pathetic and offensive to us as the sinuous manner in which a score of men of good name in modernism cover their spiritual sloth with the seamy garment of abuse. They say Professor Barnes is not a theologian, and therefore cannot speak with authority. But when *they* speak, does it sound like authority? Not at all.

We follow them every one, and they give us next to noth-

ing. They have a hard job, it is true, because they are all hereticable creatures, being members of churches which have them creed-tied. Here is a bishop, for example, who gets out of the perplexity by saying in philosophy what he would be thrown out of his church for, if he used theological words. Another, a theological school teacher, finds outlet for his liberalism in attacking the socio-economic system, and his argument is rooted in a religious theory or doctrine necessarily so liberal that if he actually spoke the doctrine out loud, it would make him more heretical than Barnes. But he never touches theology except to berate adventurous theologians. Safe but questionable! A third with a literary flair and famed as a preacher gives in the form of popular magazine articles and book reviews ideas that are nearly radicalism; but when he speaks on Sunday, do the implications of his extreme liberalism stick out? In never a word.

One specific assertion of Professor Barnes we commend to his critics. He does not believe that God directly interferes with human affairs. Is that definite enough? If so, what say the brethren?

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Chapter II

WHAT PRICE RELIGION

History, down to the present day, is a melancholy record of the horrors which can attend religion: human sacrifice, and in particular the slaughter of children, cannibalism, sensual orgies, abject superstition, hatred as between races, the maintenance of degrading customs, hysteria, bigotry, can all be laid at its charge. Religion is the last refuge of human savagery.

(Alfred North Whitehead)

I. IS THE RELIGIOUS ISSUE MERELY AN ACADEMIC PROBLEM?

It is often contended that the subject of religion is a purely academic and metaphysical question of no practical import today, or that it represents a matter of æsthetic appreciation which plays no part in practical affairs. It is held that religious discussion may be legitimate for philosophically inclined persons of leisure or for cranks and fanatics, but that no alert person actively engaged in human affairs and possessed of sound sense can well afford to spend time over the religious problem. Many friends of the writer have amiably informed him from time to time that they could understand and approve his having been willing to risk public criticism and academic discrimination in the cause of telling the truth about the causes of the World War but that they could not approve with equal heartiness his apparent determination to take even greater risks in dealing with the relatively unimportant matter of religious emancipation. An urbane writ-

er, Mr. John Cowper Powys, in his *Religion of a Sceptic*, holds that religion is something which should be regarded with complete æsthetic detachment, as a sort of collective term for the great myths and illusions of the human past, but should not be looked upon as a serious intellectual or social issue of immediate import. Others have maintained that it is actually dangerous and undesirable to raise the religious issue, on the ground that it obstructs progress by reviving dormant dogmas and stimulating sectarian passions.

The writer regrets that he cannot share this attitude. Important as he believes the problem of war guilt and world peace to be, he regards the religious issue as of infinitely greater practical significance in modern life than the problems of international relations and pacifism. If one is willing to assume the risks attendant upon a realistic study of the causes of the World War, he should be much more readily reconciled to the assumption of any unpopularity and inconvenience which may be incident to a fearless investigation into the status of religion in contemporary society. If religion exerted no practical influence upon human affairs today, we might accept with complacency Mr. Powys's suggestion that religion should be dismissed with a friendly æsthetic gesture. We shall endeavor, however, in the present chapter to set forth cogent and extensive evidence to support the view that religion refuses to subside into the position of a defunct body of outgrown superstitions, no longer actively conditioning human behavior.

So long as religion refuses to detach itself from a vivid and vital relationship to human conduct no realistically-minded person can well justify dismissing religion with a splendid gesture of intellectual and social indifference or attenuated æsthetic evaluation. As an æsthete Mr.

Powys might not actually be willing to forego the opportunity to attend a performance of *The Captive* or to peruse *The Well of Loneliness* for the privilege of indulging in contemplative appreciation of the significance of the mythology which has grown up about the legend of the Virgin Birth. One may concede the real æsthetic significance of religious mythology, when viewed in retrospective reflection. Yet, it would be difficult for a candid æsthete to uphold the view that the total æsthetic contribution of Christian mythology is comparable to the inroads upon artistic spirit and achievement which have been made by Puritanism and other manifestations of the impurity-complex and the solemnity-engendering proclivities of our religious system. We can equally easily dispose of the contention that it is positively unwise, for example, to offend a progressively inclined Catholic social-economist, who may be in favor of better legislation on labor conditions, by bringing up such controversial theological issues as are involved in the Catholic opposition to birth-control. It can easily be shown that, unless some adequate method of restricting population growth can be devised, a social situation will arise in which no amount of factory legislation will be able to bring about any marked improvement in the condition of the working-classes. It is equally evident that the only way to undermine the Catholic war on birth-control is to discredit the theological premises upon which the Catholics base their position. As long as one concedes the religious assumptions back of the Catholic attitude, the point of view of the Catholic Church towards the artificial control of the population rate is thoroughly defensible. Indeed, it is for loyal and faithful Catholics the only honorable and logical attitude to take.

It is the thesis of the writer that the orthodox religious

complex is, in its multifarious ramifications, the most active and pervasive menace to civilization which confronts mankind today, compared with which war and poverty are unimportant incidental details. While making himself thus clear and definite in regard to his attitude towards orthodoxy, the writer has already pointed out his non-hostility to a modernized secular and humanistic religion. He is not only willing but eager to coöperate with those who are adopting a tentative and experimental attitude towards the reconstruction of religion in harmony with modern knowledge and problems. It should, therefore, be very clearly understood at the outset that the following indictment of orthodox religion is in no sense meant to be an attack upon all religion. Indeed, the writer holds that the greatest service which can be rendered to the cause of the religion of the future is to point out clearly the evils and anarchronisms in existing religion, in order that intelligent reform may thus be stimulated. The most powerful argument of the progressive religionist today is the negative one, namely, the harm done by the orthodox. The truth of this assertion has been recognized by one of the ablest and most courageous of modern religious reformers, Mr. Kirby Page. His latest and most mature work, *Jesus or Christianity*, is probably the most effective indictment of the effects of organized Christianity which has ever been compiled. We cannot as yet be sure what rôle a reconstructed religion will play in the future of human society, but we can certainly be aware of the great utility of any intellectual progress which will rescue humanity from the disastrous effects of archaic superstitions.

II. HOW GREAT ARE THE EVILS WHICH RELIGION IS ABLE TO ACCOMPLISH!

1. The Religious Attitude

The heading which we have chosen for this section repeats the words of one of the greatest minds of antiquity, the Roman poet of Epicurean philosophy, Lucretius. He beheld his fellow-countrymen intimidated by the imaginary evils and dangers of the supernatural world and devoting much of their time to rites and ceremonies designed to ward off the malevolent efforts of the unseen spiritual powers. He desired to free them from this terror and this waste of time and energy.

In the two thousand years which separate us from Lucretius much has been done to liberate man from the tyranny of belief in supernatural influences upon life. The complex of superstitions is far less extensive and its domination over man less complete. If a western American farmer may occasionally pray for rain, he is no longer such a slave to his belief in the supernatural factors in life as was the Roman peasant, whose life was spent in the most diverse rites devoted to placating the spirits which were supposed to control both agricultural processes and the life of man. Yet, we have not as yet reached the condition hoped for by Lucretius, namely, one where man would be able to relinquish his fears of the unknown and, hence, to enjoy his secular existence unafraid and undaunted. Many phases of our life are still profoundly affected by a belief in the supernatural world and its powers, which, if not as crude and all-pervading as those which governed the primitive Roman farmer, are still extremely potent and comprehensive in their operation. Again, in many cases where we have relinquished a given

body of superstition we are likely to continue to follow a line of conduct which was originally based upon and justified by the superstitions which have been abandoned. In other words, we tend to go on acting as though we believed what we have intellectually and formally repudiated.

In this attempt to estimate the price paid by society for the retention of its outworn religious beliefs we shall restrict ourselves to the conditions existing at the present time in the civilized society of western Christendom. We realize, of course, that if one were interested solely in framing a case against religion he would be relinquishing some of his best material in refraining from extensive references to the wastes, pain and misery which religion has cost man in the human past. A most impressive case could be made by reference to the incredible volume of physical pain caused by the religious rites of primitive and early historic men, performed as they were without any anæsthetic other than religious fear or ecstacy. It is doubtful, indeed, whether all the ravages of disease have contributed a greater amount of purely physical suffering than have the physical operations associated with religious rites. Only a person well read in anthropology, ethnology and the history of religions can be fully aware of the variety and ingenuity of the operations upon, and mutilations of, the human body involved in the religious ritual of the past, to say nothing of the unhappiness derived from the excessive deprivation of physical necessities involved in ascetic devotions.

Along with the pain inflicted upon the living, there must be considered the vast numbers put to death as an incidental phase of religious practices. Human sacrifice on a large scale has been characteristic of many religions through the ages. It is stated upon good authority that no less than eighty thousand persons were put to death at

the dedication of one magnificent temple in pre-Spanish Mexico. Christians may raise their hands in horror at the mention of such a pious holocaust, but they have little ground for a feeling of aloofness or superiority in this regard. We may point to the execution of at least a quarter of a million innocent persons on the charge of witchcraft during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, not to mention the tens of thousands of heretics put to death, the unspeakable tortures employed by the Christians in their court procedure in the Middle Ages, or the many holy wars and crusades launched or encouraged by holy zeal. The record of Christianity in this regard is well summarized in symbolic fashion in Cabell's *Jurgen* where Jurgen is shown the largest lake in hell and finds that it is formed by the blood which the followers of the Prince of Peace have shed in advancing His cause.

2. Effect on Intellectual Life

Turning to the evil influences radiating from the conventional religion of the present day we may first consider the general intellectual attitudes which it engenders. In the first place, religion had tended to lead man to place dependence upon outside forces and factors, particularly of a supernatural sort, rather than to trust in his own abilities and resources. This has greatly impaired human confidence and efficiency and delayed the progress of civilization. This reaction towards the supernatural world had bred in man a feeling of inferiority and inadequacy which is, in differing degrees, paralyzing to human effort. When linked up, as it has been in the case of Christianity, with a sense of sin and the doctrine of the inherent and essential nature of evil in the world it has produced one of the most tragic and unfortunate, if not indeed one of the most anti-social, of all possible life reactions. Dr. John H.

Dietrich has admirably described the calamitous results of the sense of sin in his brilliant sermon on "The Superstition of Sin":—

> What a calamity that human conduct should ever have come to be estimated by reference to the will of such a God! I do not want to be too vehement; but is it anything short of appalling to think of the misery that has been endured by millions of human beings, not because they had done anything inconsistent with human well-being, but because they had transgressed or neglected some by-law of the imaginary Tyrant in the skies? Think of the millions of mothers who believed and still believe that a baby's soul went straight to everlasting torment if it had not been christened. Think of the madhouses peopled by gentle souls (of whom William Cowper may be taken as the type) who had been guilty of no sin except that of not having courage enough to reject and despise a horrible theology. Think of the myriads of men and women who have conceived themselves alienated from God and doomed to perdition because of obscure processes of their organisms which they could no more control than they could control a fit of sneezing. Observe that these instances, which might be multiplied indefinitely, do not touch any rational problem of conduct. That such problems exist and are very complex, I am the last to deny. I do not maintain that we should all have been perfectly wise and virtuous if the conception of sin had never come into the world. What I do assert and profoundly believe, is that this conception has greatly retarded, and rendered immeasurably more painful, the necessary adjustment of man's instincts and impulses to the conditions of his life on earth.

Next to the feeling of dependence, inferiority, guilt and sin one might perhaps rate second among the intellectual influences flowing from religion the creation of a complex of reactions opposed to intellectual freedom and open-mindedness. Religion creates a high degree of intellectual docility towards the dogmas of one's own religion and a corresponding hostility and intolerance

towards the dogmas of another cult. With the exception of certain modern cults and a few ancient philosophic religions, religious life has been built up about the concept of faith and its superiority to reason. Now faith, in the old religious interpretation of that term, is one of the most deplorable of all mental states and probably the one most obstructive to clarity and precision of thought. All of these intellectual reactions characteristic of orthodox religious faith are destructive of that freedom of thought, open-mindedness and spirit of intellectual adventurousness which are so essential to a vivid and pulsating intellectual life and to the most adequate exploitation of the human intellect in the cause of social advancement.

It is hardly necessary to emphasize the fact that the complex and dynamic problems of our present-day civilization demand intellectual freedom and adventure to a vastly greater degree than ever before in history. Therefore, any factors which diminish open-mindedness and mental alertness are particularly disastrous in our contemporary civilization. It is by no means certain that man will be able to deal successfully with the problems of the modern age, even with the completely unimpeded operation of his intellectual faculties; hence, anything which reduces his mental capacity is a real menace to civilization and a powerful potential contributor to the ultimate defeat of the human adventure. The religious orientation is an obstacle to any intelligent appraisal of contemporary problems in still another way. Our present age is a period of dynamic and rapid change beyond all other eras in human history. There is, therefore, a special need today for a progressive and empirical outlook upon human problems. Cultural lag was never as dangerous as it is today. Conventional religion is, however, the chief single cause of cultural lag and the main influence in society

producing a static and conservative outlook upon life. It is the outstanding obstacle to the adoption of the life of intellectual adventure concerning which Mr. Raymond Fosdick wrote so engagingly and convincingly in the New York *Times* for June 23, 1929.

The deplorable psychological influence of traditional religion becomes particularly clear and evident when it is considered from the standpoint of sound mental hygiene. Students of mental health have thoroughly established the fact that the most desirable and healthy mental states are self-reliance, buoyancy, poise, confidence, full appreciation of the potential joys of living, a high degree of absence of fear, and thorough absorption in the daily tasks and opportunities of this life. In short, it is a general life-reaction pattern which was realized to an astonishing degree by the Attic Greeks at the height of their civilization. The conventional Christian life-reaction pattern is almost the opposite of all of this. It is a compound of a sense of inferiority, guilt, inadequacy, sinfulness, solemnity, self-doubting and self-denial. It puts special reliance upon assistance, particularly supernatural, outside man himself. It is primarily interested in ultimate salvation rather than in the achievement of the best possible life here and now. Particularly serious are the unhealthy mental attitudes towards sex which are promoted by the conventional Christian approach to the problems of sex and the family. We shall have more to say about this later in dealing with religion and sex. The depressing solemnity and pessimism of the typical sermon has thus been commented upon in critical vein by Mr. Heywood Broun in the *New York Telegram* for April 29, 1929:

> The world in which we live has turned quite upside down and religion seems at the moment to occupy the lower half. Time was when people went to church to be inspirited to lofty

ideals and to escape the thrall of material things. But now the church is almost the last place in which to seek praise of kindliness or any celebration of good will.

Instead the preachers express their faith in ships and guns and penal servitude. Pity stands on the porch and cannot be allowed to enter in. Congress breaks into rapturous applause at the details of a boy's death because he carried liquor, and Christian men and women say, "Amen."

Now that I have been introduced to the current fashions in sermons through the newspapers and the radio I gravely suggest that the District Attorney take immediate action and ask the Grand Jury to end this wave of immorality which is gripping our churches. Immorality, I think, may be defined as instigation to anti-social conduct. By this standard the Church in New York is far and away a more flagrant offender than any current playwright or novelist.

Even in the so-called "dirty" plays of Broadway there does run pretty generally the gospel of the sanctity of humankind. Playwrights deal largely with the potentialities of man. And tragedy itself, although it marks certain limitations of the human spirit, celebrates the magnificence of the struggle against frustration.

The Church, as I see it, is engaged in quite different propaganda. On the basis of an investigation extending over a couple of weeks I have come across no sermon which was not devoted to the deflation of the ego. Over and over again the minister ascends the pulpit for the purpose of telling his flock that they are all miserable sinners. Out of the reports of more than forty sermons I have found only one which expressed delight in anything. A Presbyterian parson spoke well of Lindbergh. Much more commonly I find, "New York Modern Babylon," "Preaches of Sin," "Flaming Youth to Burn Hereafter," "Devil Inventor of Jazz," "Predicts End of World."

As far as I can gather, they were all talking of the various imperfections and misdeeds of mankind. God was mentioned in passing, but He must have seemed to the average congregation a figure remote and feeble as compared to the devil, whose triumphs were so generally recorded. The devil must look forward to Sunday, for his scrap book of press clippings

is augmented greatly every Sabbath. While it is true that he does not get much outright support, he receives an enormous amount of frightened and respectful attention. Certainly no clergyman ever laughs at him.

Even when spring comes rushing in and goes rope-skipping before a blue-gold drop there is no hint of this beauty in the churches. There is never a word of trees or sky or freshening breeze. Instead the preachers talk of gin and jazz and general depravity. We are told that there is no health in us. Schools, parents, religion have all failed, say the men in the pulpits. They ask us to cringe and be ashamed. Every thundering sentence is a blow against the self-respect of each human being present.

Personally I don't believe I have been much harmed. Before Sunday comes 'round again I will have had an opportunity to go to the theater and watch representations of the deeds of heroes and heroines. I will not believe utterly in everything set before me, but I will take away enough to be elated and proud to be alive. And in my shoulders and my soul I may find an itch to strike out against evil and give the old devil a punch in the nose.

Nor will it be necessary to turn to plays or novels to find confirmation of the fact that humankind is glorious at best. I can read in the papers of the gallantry of a Margaret Sanger or a Mary Ware Dennett.

And so it is not for my own sake that I ask the authorities to censor the church sermons. If I had a 16-year-old daughter I would not like to have her hear all this defeatist talk. I am not minded to have her come to believe that the devil is mighty and must prevail. I will not tolerate any body of propagandists who wish to send her out into the world licked before she starts.

Possibly some word of friendly criticism from a well wisher may carry weight with the clergy and make it unnecessary to back up the patrol wagon to any place of worship. Even from a wholly materialistic standpoint they may come to realize that it would be no bad idea to scrub up their sermons. I haven't a doubt in the world that there is a considerable public for a clean and healthy church.

The supreme gloom and solemnity associated with orthodox religion comes, of course, in connection with the day devoted to worship. It is probable that the greatest psychological liability in the whole Christian solemnity-complex has been the character of the Christian, especially the Protestant, Sunday. Herbert Asbury, in his *Up From Methodism*, thus describes the life in a typical evangelical community, Farmington, Missouri, on the Lord's Day. The writer can testify to the existence of similar psychological conditions in central New York towns at the same period. Mr. Asbury writes as follows:[1]

Sunday should be a day of gladness, and of light and beauty, for it is then that the forthright religionist is closest to his God, and when he is, if ever, in communion with the Holy Spirit and presumably receives instruction with which to confound the wicked during the ensuing week. But in small communities which suffer from the blight of religion it never is, and when I was a boy in Farmington, Sunday was a day of dreadful gloom; over everything hung an atmosphere of morbid fear and dejection. In the morning the whole town donned its Sunday suit, almost always black and funereal and depressing, and therefore becoming to religious practice, and trudged sorrowfully and solemnly to Sunday School and to church, there to wail doleful hymns and hear an unlearned man "measure with words the immeasurable and sink the string of thought into the fathomless;" and beseech the Lord upon the universal prayer theme of "gimme." Then the village marched, in mournful cadence, back home for Sunday dinner. But before the meal was eaten the juvenile members of the religious household were commanded to remove their sabbath raiment, and were not again permitted to assume the habiliments of the godly until after supper, when the family clutched its Bibles and wandered forth despairingly to evening service.

These excursions, with attendance upon the various meet-

[1] Asbury, *op. cit.*, p. 36 ff.

ings of the young people's societies and other church organizations, comprised almost the sum total of the Sunday activity of our town's inhabitants. In recent years the young folks there appear to have gone wholeheartedly to the Devil, and are gallivanting about the country in automobiles, listening to radios, dancing, attending baseball games on the Sabbath and otherwise disporting themselves in a sinful manner, but in my youth we had to observe a very definite list of Sunday taboos, in addition to the special don'ts laid down by the more devout families, according to their fear of God and the fervor of their belief.

We could not play card games on Sunday. Regulation playing cards of course, were taboo at all times in the best and most religious families, for God, we were told, had informed the Preacher that cards were an invention of the Devil, designed to lure true believers into sin; but on Sunday we could not even play such games as Lotto, Old Maid and Authors. On week days these were considered very amusing and instructive pastimes, although in some quarters it was felt that they caused too much laughter, but if anyone so much as thought of them on Sunday he was headed for Hell . . .

Parties and teas were forbidden, and we could not visit on Sunday, as a general rule, except among relatives. And such visits were usually turned into holy sing-songs, but since most of the hymns were either pornographic or slightly Sadistic, there were thrills galore in this sort of thing.

Walking along the main street of the town on Sunday was a sin of the first magnitude. Occasionally a group would obtain permission to stroll sedately down to Old Maid's Springs and take kodak pictures in a refined and genteel manner, but a young man and a girl caught ambling along Columbia street were the objects of much unfavorable comment. It was generally agreed that they were no better than they should be, and often a Preacher or a Brother or Sister, would stop them and order them to cease desecrating the Lord's Day by such frivolous conduct.

"Go home," they would be told, "and pray to God to forgive you."

We cannot fail to point out, however briefly, the unquestionably stultifying and paralyzing intellectual influence of the gospel of today. While recognizing the dignity and force of the best preaching in America, it cannot be denied that most of that which emanates from the holy men of today is indescribable drivel, from any decent standard of intellectuality whatever. The greater part of the "wisdom" which emerges from American pulpits at the present time must indeed exert a deadly effect on our intellectual life and play its important part in keeping Americans from thinking for themselves. The radio has, if anything, intensified this nuisance, though it does give a few great preachers a wider audience.

3. Religion and Political Institutions

There are a number of ways in which traditional religion obstructs the most intelligent and efficient approach to the state and political problems, national and international. In the first place, there is a definite hang-over of the reverential attitude towards the state which received its highest expression in the deification of the monarch and in the cult of emperor-worship back in antique society. This attitude, of course, no longer exists in its former bald and naïve form, but powerful vestiges remain to obscure clear thinking about political institutions. A considerable halo of divinity encompassed the Russian Tsars down to the extinction of the Romanoff line in 1917. In all countries where monarchy is taken seriously the secular powers of the monarch shade off into a field of sentimental reverence strongly contaminated with a religious attitude.

When visiting Hungary recently the writer was greatly impressed with the strength and evident sincerity of the truly religious fervor in the cult of monarchy espoused

by very well educated and highly cultured members of the ruling classes and by many in university circles. Even in republican countries there exists a tendency to personify the state in the figure of the president and to build up a religious attitude about our presidents, especially those that have been assassinated or have died in office. References to the martyred Lincoln or the sainted McKinley are common enough. Dr. Kallen, in his *Why Religion?*, has called attention to the interesting comment of Mr. George J. Ryan, President of the New York Board of Education, relative to the sudden passing of President Harding in August, 1923:

> To our children the Chief Executive of the Nation has always been the personality of the Republic. He robed the invisible body of the state, made it actual and instilled abiding faith in the reality. It is our duty as leaders of the school system to firmly intrench that sanctified reverence of our departed President. It is our part to cherish his memory with a halo of love. It is our responsibility to give unity to the sentiment of commiseration in our children.

Closely related to this continuing tendency to personify the state through its ceremonial or responsible head is the providential view of political processes. We are still prone to regard political activities as in considerable part a matter of luck and chance. We pray to God to give the emperor, king or president, health and wisdom and to bless the country with peace, prosperity, or both. We even attach to particular policies like, let us say, the protective tariff an almost magical efficacy which in no important way depends upon a knowledge of the actual economics of the tariff system. During the presidential campaigns in the United States one will frequently hear Republican campaign orators referring to the protective tariff with an air similar to the pronouncement of a Cath-

olic cardinal with respect to one of the most sacred dogmas of the church.

Not only does the populace at large tend to interpret and excuse the conduct of our statesmen on the hypothesis of providential supervision and control; statesmen themselves frequently exploit this same point of view as a justification of their policies. A particularly good example of this is to be found in President McKinley's explanation of why he had the United States retain the Philippine Islands after the Spanish American War: [2]

> The truth is I didn't want the Philippines and when they came to us as a gift from the gods, I did not know what to do with them . . . I sought counsel from all sides—Democrats as well as Republicans—but got little help. I thought first we would take only Manila; then Luzon; then other islands, perhaps, also. I walked the floor of the White House night after night until midnight; and I am not ashamed to tell you, gentlemen, that I went down on my knees and prayed Almighty God for light and guidance more than one night. And one night late it came to me this way—I don't know how it was, but it came: (1) that we could not give them back to Spain—that would be cowardly and dishonorable; (2) that we could not turn them over to France or Germany—our commercial rivals in the Orient—that would be bad business and discreditable; (3) that we could not leave them to themselves—they were unfit for self-government—and they would soon have anarchy and misrule over there worse than Spain's was; and (4) that there was nothing left for us to do but to take them all, and to educate the Filipinos, and uplift and civilize and Christianize them, and by God's grace do the very best we could by them as our fellow-men for whom Christ also died. And then I went to bed, and went to sleep and slept soundly.

Such attitudes towards politics, statesmen and political policies are fatal obstructions to any sane and helpful

[2] J. F. Rhodes, *The McKinley and Roosevelt Administrations*, pp. 106-107.

view of such matters. There is little possibility of our developing the best forms of political institutions, exerting adequate scrutiny over our political servants or choosing with wisdom our political policies until we recognize that the state, and all political processes going on therein, is exclusively a man-made product, neither better nor worse than its architects and operators. We must see clearly that the conspicuous failure of a political officer is not due to divine displeasure, but is a proof of that particular official's specific incapacity for the position and of the lack of sagacity on the part of those who appointed him or cast their votes for him. It would be far more helpful to American citizens if clergymen, when making references to politics, would, instead of invoking God's blessings on the visible head of the state, read something from Lord Bryce, Lippmann or Mencken on the problems of democratic government; from Laski, Beard and others on sound sense in modern politics; and from books like Samuel Hopkins Adams' *Revelry* illustrating the realities of American political life. Further, we should point out that, in so far as this religious attitude towards the state lessens or prevents candid and thorough-going criticism of political institutions, it delays political reform and reconstruction. The problem of regulating modern life through political agencies may, indeed, be an insuperable one for mankind, but certainly there can be no hope of handling our political issues without first submitting them to a thorough-going process of secularization.

Another unfortunate influence of religion in the political realm is its introduction of the bigotry and hatreds derived from religious prejudices into political discussions, partisan politics and political preferences and appointments. We have passed the day when the state

might espouse or repress a particular heresy and slay and maim thousands in the process or when a clash between church and state might develop great warring parties like the Guelphs and Ghibellenes. Yet we have in our day a perpetuation of this state of affairs of unfortunately extensive proportions. Anti-semitism and other forms of fanaticism in Europe, and the hatred of Catholics and Jews evidenced in the luxuriating of the Ku Klux Klan in the United States are illustrations of the injection of religious issues into politics. The tendency of the Jews and Catholics to exploit their special capacities for subterranean intrigue in defense has been inevitable and, in the light of the circumstances, defensible.

At times religious bigotry in politics may arise to such heights as to swamp or obscure the real political issues involved. Such was the case with the presidential campaign in the United States in the autumn of 1928. This election was far more a religious crusade than a political campaign. The excitement engendered by the raising of the Protestant-Catholic issue brought to the polls millions who had not voted in years and piled up the largest vote in proportion to the legitimate electorate in the political annals of the twentieth century. Republican leaders like Mrs. Willebrandt openly called upon evangelical Protestant sects to rally to the polls and repel the onslaught of the Vatican. The Catholics retaliated by well known devices more secret, in better taste and probably more effective. The virulence of the religious calumny can best be illustrated by representative excerpts from the sermons and writings of the time. Mr. H. L. Mencken worked up an interesting anthology of this material in the Baltimore *Evening Sun* for August 24, 1928, in an editorial entitled, "Onward Christian Soldiers." The *Baptist and Commoner* of Benton, Arkansas, offers the following interesting com-

ment on Catholics and on what it meant to vote for Alfred E. Smith:

They [the Catholic priests] are always to be found at the bedside of the dying to extort money for the pretense of making prayers, and on hand to extort from the widow every penny possible for the same pretense. To meet them in the street or in the church, they seem to be devout; but when you come to know them you find that they are hypocrites and filled with iniquity . . .

The devil's crowd—Catholics, political demagogues, brewers, bootleggers, prostitutes—the whole motley belly-gang are for Smith! . . .

To vote for Al Smith would be granting the Pope the right to dictate to this Government what it should do.

A vote for Al Smith would be the sacrificing of our public schools. Rome says to hell with our public schools.

To vote for Al Smith would be to say that all Protestants are now living in adultery because they were not married by a priest.

To vote for Al Smith is to say our offspring are bastards. Are you ready to accept this?

The Baptist *Message* of Shreveport, La., thus condemns Mr. Smith's alleged prostration before the power of Rome:

During the Catholic Ecumenical Council, held in Chicago some time ago, while the Pope's official representative Cardinal Bonzano, was passing through New York city, it is said that the Mayor of New York, who is also a Roman Catholic, and Governor Smith met this foreign churchman at the ship landing, and conducted him, with brass bands and military escort, to the New York City Hall, and there, placing him upon a *throne* erected for him in the City Hall—he, Governor Alfred Emanuel Smith, Governor of the Sovereign State of New York, in the United States of America, did prostrate himself before and bowed the knee to this foreign representative of a foreign potentate, and did kiss the ring on the hand of this foreigner, in token of his abject submission to the authority of the Pope of Rome.

This state of affairs is particularly striking and unfortunate in a country which has prided itself upon its relative freedom from religious fanaticism and has erected elaborate constitutional guaranties of religious freedom.

Unquestionably the chief menace of traditional religion in politics is the tendency of the church to interfere in matters of political import, in other words, the old problem of church and state. The average American still tends to think of the issue of church and state in terms of his medieval history. He recalls the story of the discipline of Henry IV of Germany by Pope Gregory VII or the humiliation of John of England, Philip Augustus of France, Otto of Germany and Frederick of Sicily by Pope Innocent III. Americans are prone to hold that the only danger with respect to the possible intrusion of the church into political affairs is to be found in the alleged machinations of the Catholic Church. The possible threat of Catholicism to political chastity and freedom in the United States was raised in Mr. Marshall's memorable letter to Governor Smith in the *Atlantic Monthly* and it was a chief battle-cry of the Republicans in the campaign of 1928. Tammany Hall since the Irish invasion of New York City, or the Boston theocracy under the aëgis of His Eminence, Cardinal O'Connell, offer cogent contemporary examples of Catholicism in action in politics.

The writer is willing to concede that the Catholics will still bear watching, as the recent agreement between the Pope and Mussolini, especially as regards the education of Italian children, has shown. Yet it so happens that the great religious menace to political freedom and autonomy in the United States is to be found in the activities of the evangelical Protestants, particularly the Methodists. Those who have familiarized themselves with such books as Peter Odegard's *Pressure Politics: A Study of the*

Anti-Saloon League or Justin Steuart's *Wayne Wheeler, Dry Boss*, and with the summary of this sort of material in Arthur Sears Henning's article in *Liberty* for April 6, 1929, will realize that we have in the United States today a condition which rivals that which existed in Europe under Innocent III at the opening of the thirteenth century. Indeed, it may be doubted whether the Catholic church ever exerted a greater control over the politics of a leading medieval Catholic state than is exercised over American politics today by the Methodist Episcopal Church and its evangelical allies, particularly the Baptists, Presbyterians and Campbellites (Disciples of Christ). The tyranny of the evangelical lobby over our federal government in regard to the so-called moral issues in which they are interested is actually incredible to one who has not examined the clinical literature available on the subject. In the New York *Telegram* for July 10, 1929, Heywood Broun offers the following observation on the tendency for the evangelical lobby to dominate federal politics and create a state church:

> Speaking of infallibility, I am reminded of Dr. Clarence True Wilson's article in Collier's about prohibition. As far as the discussion of Volsteadism goes, there is nothing particularly startling in the piece. There is no news in the fact that Dr. Wilson would go even to the length of a bloody war to promote temperance, and we all know that his remedy against a protesting minority would be to put the whole lot of them in jail. But in one other respect Dr. Wilson was less moderate. During the late campaign it was charged that the more political of the Protestants were actually seeking to establish a State religion. This was indignantly denied by the prohibition ministers. But now Dr. Clarence True Wilson practically admits his desire for such a mighty upheaval in American tradition.
>
> "The putting of the fear of God in the minds of those who fear neither God nor man is one of the chief functions of good government," writes Dr. Wilson.

Now, by "God" the reformer undoubtedly means the God of the Methodist Committee of Temperance and Public Morals. The revelations of this Deity are generally made by Dr. Wilson directly. Men of divergent faiths may protest that the Creator pictured by Dr. Wilson is not the true God but a tribal deity, a jitney Jehovah. Their protests will avail them nothing, for Dr. Wilson already possesses temporal as well as spiritual power. After the revelation from his own particular God, Dr. Wilson issues his orders to Congress. He tells the assembled representatives that a new sin has just been set up and that he wants a law passed about it. And after the law has been passed he will add a request for marines to enforce it at the bayonet point. If this isn't a State religion pray tell me just what is or ever has been.

The recent letters of Senator Royal S. Copeland and Congressman George Holden Tinkham protesting against this state of affairs are but trifling oases of rebellion in a desert of docile obedience. The prevalence of federal legislators who vote dry and drink wet is adequate evidence of the effect of this psychic intimidation in destroying integrity of character and consistency of purpose on the part of bulldozed legislators.

It may be well to offer a cogent illustration of the sort of intellect and culture which dominate the cabal of Methodists and their evangelical allies who exert such an unprecedented control over American legislation today, particularly in regard to so-called "moral issues." There may be some legitimate differences of opinion as to the moral aspects of prohibition, but few persons making any pretension to civilization will be likely to maintain that dancing is a hideous moral offence. In order to reveal the type of mentality which directs the publications and lobbying efforts of the Board of Temperance, Prohibition and Public Morals of the Methodist Episcopal Church, we therefore reproduce herewith the denunciation of dancing by one of the great savants and publicists of that organ-

ization, Dr. Guy Fitch Phelps. In one of the most widely circulated tracts issued by the above organization he lists the following "fifteen points against dancing":

Dancing condemns itself. Its tendencies and fruits are always evil. No censorship has ever been able to control its innate degradation. It is no more an expression of normal buoyancy than intoxicants are a complement of nerve excitement. Every nation that has perished had developed this moral deformity to the fine arts of lust before their end came. Two centuries before Christ, Scipio Aemelius lifted up his voice against dancing in Rome, while in Greece, Pericles, "Greatest of the Greeks," had part in the nightly revels around the statue of Silenus, the god of drunkenness, with the notorious Aspasia in his arms. And yet those ancient debaucheries were more respectable than many of the dances practiced everywhere in America at this hour.

Three notorious characters, Catherine de Medici of Italy, Louis Thirteenth and Louis Fourteenth of France, originated the modern steps and many of the obscene positions which go with them. The uglier features of the amusement were very attractive to the courtesans and libertines of the French court, but the nation degenerated rapidly into the bloody vortex of the Revolution. From the French came the "shuffle," "kiss," "hug," "high-kick" and "can-can."

J. Lewis Guyon, proprietor of one of the most popular dancing resorts in Chicago, says: "The 'fox-trot,' the 'toddle,' the 'one step' and the 'shimmy,' are nothing more nor less than pelvic massages." He adds: "We are forced to witness our sons and our daughters dancing at all our leading hotels, clubs, society balls, church and college dances, in a way that they should at least have a marriage license before stepping on the floor." A prominent theater manager said recently: "There are two ways to succeed with dancers. If they have a sensational, acrobatic novelty that has never been tried before, that will make money. Otherwise you have got to *take their clothes off*."

Following are some of the dances being indulged in in America: "The Wesleyan dance," the "kaffe keltch dive," "the scandal dances," "the fig leaf," in which the dancing is

done in practically a nude state; "the skirt," "two-step," "tango," "maxixe," "turkey trot," "bunny hug," "muscle," "fox trot," "hirsh trot," "shimmy," "terrace glide," "rocking horse glide," "hug-me-tight," "the Charlie Chaplin wiggle," "shimmy shivers," "kitchen sink," "grizzly bear," "the skunk waltz," "the Texas tommy," "the body hold," "the Argentine Tango," "the mucilage glide," "the-walk-the-dog," "the ball-the-jack," "the tickle toe," etc., etc., with "Chinese restaurants" and "central cafes" where young men are permitted to "go as far as they like."

Comment is unnecessary, for the very names of these dances indicate the unthinkable moral degradation which has made them possible. There is an appalling reason for Dr. William McKeever saying: "The devil is the author of the modern dance and the underworld is its proper habitat."

1. *Dancing is Condemned by the Bible.* Those passages which mention dancing refer simply to a mode of religious worship in which the sexes were separated. The degrading indulgence is condemned by such commands as, "Love not the world," "Come out from among them and be ye separate saith the Lord," "the friendship of the world is enmity with God."

2. *Prayer or the Reading of Scripture,* if introduced into any ballroom, would break up the indulgence, and throw the participants into angry confusion.

3. *All Evangelical Denominations* have condemned the dance emphatically, such as the Methodist, Baptist, Presbyterian and Congregational, and even the Catholic Church has been forced to warn its people against this form of amusement.

4. *All Spiritual Leaders of the Past* have opposed the dance. Imagine Christ, St. John, Paul, Wesley, Spurgeon, Knox, Finney, Coffee, Havergal or Moody taking part in a dance, even of the most "respectable" kind! How then would they share in or commend the unspeakable debaucheries which are the pleasure of the American people?

5. *The Law of Truth and Morals is that of Separation.* The Scriptures command "separation" from the world. Certainly the dance is of the world. The minerals are divided; the animal kingdom is separated into families; the christian community is separated from carnal, pleasure-loving society.

Dancing is admitted by all to be a worldy indulgence, and falls under the command to "come out from among them," which is the dictum of the Infinite.

6. *All Moral Reformers and Those Who Deal with Delinquents* are without exception opposed to the dance. Police matrons, rescue missionaries, and all who deal with the questions of immorality, are a unit in their opinions that the dance is a degrading and destructive institution.

7. *Dancing Augments the Divorce Evil.* Of one hundred divorce cases which had come under the jurisdiction of a certain judge, eighty-six of them grew out of the dance. It need not be argued that the monstrous vulgarities of the dance hall have led to countless domestic tragedies.

8. *The Dance Prematurely Stimulates the Sex Forces of the Young.* This indictment alone should end the debate with all pure-minded people. The pleasure of dancing centers in the sex forces, which the bringing of the dancers into close proximity excites abnormally. For this reason dancing loses its charm when men and women are asked to indulge in it after being segregated. Thus through the "teen" period, when sex should develop slowly, and parallel the mind and conscience, young men and women are developed into abnormalities, in countless cases, by this lascivious indulgence. The dance is largely responsible for the fearful number of those, of both sexes, who are mortifying with nameless disorders.

9. *Dancing Destroys the Modesty of Men and Women.* It is impossible to retain a fine sense of self-respect and moral perception and take part in the loathsome dances which are in vogue everywhere. The association of bodies, in ways which would be ground for divorce if perpetrated in any other place; the passing from one pair of amorous arms to another; the touch of cheeks and the pressure of breasts; the answering eye, the flushed face and the quickened breath—all inevitably degrade those who indulge them.

10. *Dancing is Never the Result of Godly Living.* All the ideals of Christian consistency are violated by the sex-crazed dancer. The ballroom habitué is always dead to spiritual things. He does not care what becomes of the church or the world, and he avoids places of prayer or revivals of religion as he would contagion. Innately the dancer knows that what

he is doing does not conform to the requirements of clean living.

11. *Dancing is Not the Result of Culture or Intelligence.* The most degraded vagabond may be an accomplished dancer. Heathen tribes are much given to it. Neither education, culture, intellectuality or moral decency are necessary in performing the "shimmy" or the "tickle-toe." The ballroom is the favorite resort of libertines and women of shady character. Those who make any claim to decency should denounce an institution which thrives best where there are no morals at all.

12. *Dancing is Wholly Selfish.* Men and women do not visit ballrooms seeking to invest their influences to the uplift of others; they are wholly selfish; they indulge this very lowest form of pleasure not caring what its fruits may be either in their own lives or the lives of others. This is wholly contrary to the generosity of nature, the needs of the world and the nature of God.

13. *The Ballroom is the White Slaver's Best Chance.* White Slavers boast that so long as the dance halls remain they will have little trouble in supplying their markets with women. Therefore they visit all dance halls, and mark their victims. In such places these vampires are permitted to come in contact with the young womanhood of every community, and to test their strength of character while indulging the "tangoes" and "glides." It requires an unpardonable lack of moral discernment to defend such an institution.

14. *The Modern Dance is a Sex Debauch.* This must be said, for it is true. Ex-dancing masters admit it. All reformed dancers concede it. Separate the sexes and dancing would die of its own lack of interest. It is the mental adultery associated with the institution which gives it so much charm. This is proved by the disgusting and filthy dances which have been invented, so utterly indecent that they fall little short of criminal acts. Indeed, it is well known that in some dance halls the debauch has been carried even that far. And there is usually a "resort" near at hand to take care of the overflow of sensuality. The charm of the dance is the moist hand, the feel of bodies held close, the consent to indulge, the clang of jazz, the chafing limbs, the vulgar attitudes. These constitute that wine of the flesh which makes the soul drunk.

15. *The Dance Destroys the Ones Who Need Help.* The high standard of Christianity is to "support the weak" and to avoid all meat that "would make a brother offend." But dancers destroy those who are not able to resist temptation. Numberless thousands who under normal circumstances would have remained pure have been slaughtered in the dance hall. With all these counts against it, and not one in its favor, the ballroom should be sent to the scrap-heap where culture and civilization have relegated no end of other abominations.

It will, of course, be objected that the above material is but an unusual if not unique aberration, and that it is grossly unfair to judge the temper and attitude of the Methodist Board by such an excerpt. The fact is, however, that this is completely representative of the publications issued by the Board, as anyone who will take the pains to acquire their literature may ascertain for himself. We recognize that many civilized Methodist preachers take an altogether different attitude towards dancing and other modern recreations, but this does not alter the case at issue. The cabal which controls the Board of Temperance, Prohibition and Public Morals is the group which dominates and directs the interference in federal and state politics and controls the actual moral policy of the church among the majority of communicants. The cultivated and modernized Methodist ministers may look with contempt upon benighted dervishes in their sect, but it is the latter who are active and triumphant in bringing their policies to bear upon legislation and public opinion.

Not only does traditional religion thus harrass and confuse our political machinery in its domestic activities; it also frequently contributes to unfortunate tendencies in international relations. The close interrelationship of missionary enterprise and imperialism has been pointed out by many writers, and at times, such as the Boxer Revolt of 1900, the missionary influence has been the

strongest single factor in provoking armed outbreaks. The most regrettable influence of religion upon international relations is, however, its stimulation of fanaticism and savagery in time of war. It is usually held that Christ preached the gospel of peace, though there are passages assigned to him in Holy Writ which convey the opposite impression. In our day certainly the great majority of Christian leaders render at least lip-service to the cause of pacifism in time of peace.

The unfortunate fact is, of course, that ecclesiastical pacifism does not carry over into the time of the approach and onset of war. In the chapter on the churches during the World War in his *Our Social Heritage*, Graham Wallas has shown the futility of expecting our churches to check war and has pointed out the manner in which the churches of all the warring states represented the World War as a holy crusade against the forces of evil and contributed notably to the development of a savage attitude towards the enemy nations. In a brilliant and courageous article on "The Parsons and the War," in the *American Mercury* for February, 1927, Mr. Granville Hicks has told the sorry story of the debâcle of American clergymen after 1914 and particularly after our entry into the War in 1917. It is doubtful if history records a more incredible example of misrepresentation and hate-mongering than the conduct of eminent American ministers like Newell Dwight Hillis in their slanders on the German people and their misrepresentation of the conduct of German soldiers in the War. Those few clergymen who remained true to their pacifist ideals in wartime, such as Paul Jones and Norman Thomas, were denounced, demoted and persecuted.

Not only the clerical Christians deserted their peace-time ideals with alacrity; the great lay leaders of conventional Christianity and peace-time pacifism, such as

Mr. Bryan, laid aside their interest in arbitration and peace, approved American entry into the War, and ridiculed pacifist objectors to the war policy. The fanaticism of the clergy during the World War was one of the most important factors in building up the myth of a "holy war" which was so disastrous in its psychological and political effects. Finally, it may be pointed out that if extreme forms of nationalism, such as conventional patriotism, represent the chief single cause of modern war, it is equally true that the religious elements in patriotism are among the chief dynamic impulses giving patriotism life and vitality. We not only develop flag worship and a flag cult, but create the impression that we serve God by adoring the patriotic symbols.

The Christians have frequently attempted to vindicate the pacific leanings and teachings of Christianity by comparing it with the warlike proclivities of Mohammedanism. It is well, however, to compare the conduct of the representatives of these two religions in their conquest of Jerusalem at the time of the Crusades. The Christians, upon capturing the Holy City, slew the Infidels and Jews right and left, until the streets ran with blood. When the Mohammedan chieftain, Saladin, recaptured the city he allowed the Christians to depart in peace and safety.

4. Religion and Law

It goes without saying that the disastrous influence of orthodox religion upon politics is paralleled by an equally unfortunate effect upon law, which is naturally so closely related to political institutions. The reverential and providential attitude towards politics, which is fostered by religion, carries over into our traditional attitude towards law. Even though we recognize today that laws are man made, yet we maintain an air of essential piety and reverence towards law in general and the principle of legal

control. The average American approaches law and the courts with an air of awe and mystery, akin to that of his primitive progenitor who actually believed that laws were handed down from God or the gods to man. The virtue of obedience to law is rarely inculcated upon the basis of secular considerations such as maintaining the integrity of society, but is still linked up in large part with something akin to the primitive taboo. This pietistic approach to law makes it hard to proceed more intelligently with the problems of legal reform, which depend for an intelligent handling upon the frank recognition that laws are a purely secular product, possess validity in proportion to their service to a particular society at a given time, and can claim our loyal support only to the degree that they are adapted to our social needs.

This reverence for law develops inevitably into a mystical attitude towards judges and courts. The Supreme Court of the United States is regarded by the average American as a veritable collection of semi-divine sages dispensing absolute justice after the manner of the Hebraic Yahweh. The suggestion by Myers, Goodnow, Beard and others that the judges might be human beings, swayed by their prejudices and predispositions as are other mortals, was greeted with a chorus of rage by even highly cultured Americans, who regarded such insinuations as nothing short of sacrilege. The most undemocratic aspect of our political system is the practice of the Supreme Court in setting aside federal legislation as unconstitutional, but so deep-seated is the popular awe for judicial precedent and procedure that any proposal to nullify this practice is howled down with almost complete unanimity even by those who would profit most by its elimination. The main stumbling-block to social legislation and social reform in America today is the "due-process"

clause of the Fourteenth Amendment, as interpreted judicially since the middle of the 'eighties of the last century, but few have the temerity even to call attention to this fact, to say nothing of abating the nuisance.

Religion is responsible for the existence on the statute books of many laws which involve offences that are not seriously menacing or at all anti-social. This state of affairs is doubly unfortunate in that it leads to the arrest and punishment of persons who have not committed any act harmful to society and it wastes the time and expense which should be devoted by the police and courts to the apprehension and treatment of the truly criminal classes. Laws of this sort are chiefly archaic vestiges from the past, embodying earlier religious reactions or taking the form of sumptuary legislation which attempts to regulate by law the details of the daily conduct of individuals. Laws against blasphemy and the like are good examples of the first type, while the legislation relative to petty gambling, minor sex offences, and prohibition well illustrate the latter. There is, of course, a close historical and psychological relationship between the two, for most sumptuary legislation grows out of antiquated religious view of morals. The spectacle of robberies and murders being committed in large numbers under the very nose of the police, while the latter are dissipating their energies in breaking up petting-parties, frisking flasks and arresting participants in crap-games will indicate well enough specific ways in which the administration of justice is diverted and hampered by the sumptuary legislation growing out of religious preconceptions.

There is little doubt that in America today the religious influence on law operates most unfortunately in regard to sex offenses and the prohibition of the consumption of alcoholic liquors. Whether or not one is willing to go as

far as Bertrand Russell does and hold that the law should not concern itself with the matter of sex until children are involved, it is certain that the great majority of our present legislation on sex matters is as indefensible as it is mischievous. It is difficult to justify legal interference in those sexual relations which do not involve either personal violence or fraudulent representations. Many laws on sex matters have led to unanticipated results worse than the evils they have sought to correct. The Mann Act has probably saved but few "white slaves", yet it has forwarded blackmail on a large scale and intimidated many honorable citizens interested only in wholly voluntary sex relations of a high order.

The most indefensible of all types of legal interference with sex matters which is promoted by religion is that which outlaws the giving of information relative to sex education and birth-control. There is no phase of education more indispensable to human happiness than education relative to sex, but today most of the really relevant sex education is prevented by law under heavy penalties. At the same time, the reprehensible misinformation on sexual matters distributed under religious auspices is permitted to be taught and circulated with the utmost freedom. We have been shocked and amused during the last year or so by the revelation of the persistence of the witch-cult in certain backward parts of Pennsylvania, but the trial of Mary Ware Dennett and the raid on the Birth Control Clinic in New York City in the spring of 1929 were fully as much of a cultural anachronism and social disgrace as contemporary belief in witchcraft. A man like Canon Chase, one of the chief critics of Mrs. Dennett, approaches the sexual problem on the basis of premises as antique and unsupportable as those upon which a witch-doctor operates.

Disastrous as are the effects of sumptuary legislation and obscurantist interference in the field of sex, there is no doubt that the most striking example of the religious reaction upon legislation is to be found in our attempt to enforce the absolute prohibition of the manufacture and consumption of alcoholic liquors. Most sensible persons will concede the desirability of some sane regulation of the manufacture and sale of liquor, but it is difficult to justify absolute prohibition on any grounds other than those of religious fanaticism. The deplorable results of the effort to enforce the Eighteenth Amendment in the United States cannot be obscured by any efforts to defend and dignify it through christening the enterprise a "noble experiment." It has demoralized our police system, cluttered up our courts with a vast number of cases, thus delaying the administration of justice in serious criminal cases, and led to an alarming disregard of human life and liberty on the part of both bootleggers and enforcement officers. Prohibition agents have murdered right and left, often killing persons who have not had any liquor in their possession and have been total abstainers for life. It is no exaggeration to say, as one critic has done, that prohibition in the United States has made murder a lesser crime than the possession of a pint of gin or the consumption of a glass of beer. Worse than all else, it has created a total situation which will make it very difficult to retreat from impossible prohibition to reasonable and successful regulation. The prohibition muddle is the most discussed issue in American life today and its existence can be traced almost wholly to the reaction of traditional religious views upon juristic theory and legislative practice.

Finally, the religious point of view has led to the evolution of a doctrine of criminal responsibility and the treat-

ment of the criminal which obstructs progress towards any rational method of dealing with the crime problem. The religious notion of the freedom of choice in human conduct has furnished the basis for the doctrine of criminal responsibility which dominates our entire system of criminal procedure outside certain advanced juvenile courts. It is held that the criminal is perfectly free to choose law-abiding modes of conduct and that when he commits a crime he arbitrarily decides to perform some act disastrous to society. These assumptions lead naturally and logically to the conventional legal theory of punishment and to the whole complex of punitive philosophy which governs criminal procedure today. If a man wilfully damages society by a crime, then society should react by deliberately punishing the culprit, in part as social revenge and in part as an example to other citizens which will deter them from similar criminal acts. Until we are able to destroy root and branch the free moral agent doctrine in criminal responsibility, to establish the scientific view of human behavior, criminal and normal, and to prove that scientific treatment rather than arbitrary punishment embodies the only method of effecting the reformation of the criminal, our criminal procedure will remain as it is today hopelessly archaic and inadequate.

While religion is usually regarded as a great bulwark of law and order, it not infrequently appears as a stimulant to lawlessness. In his important recent work on lynchings in the south, *Rope and Faggot*, Mr. Walter White has shown that the frequency of lynchings is in direct proportion to the strength and purity of the orthodox Christian religion. The chief defenders of lawlessness and indiscriminate shootings in prohibition enforcement today are the ecclesiastical fanatics, determined to enforce their prejudices even at the cost of civil war. Sometimes the

clergy participate themselves, as the case of "Two-gun Norris" of Texas bears ample witness.

5. Religion and Modern Business

The influence of religion on our economic life is not less extensive and ramified than its effects upon law and politics. The critics of conventional Christianity are very commonly attacked by the religionists on the ground that they are materialistic and sordid, but it can easily be shown that the very pivot of our present materialistic economic order, with its primary interest in pecuniary profits, is an outgrowth of modern Christian ethics, especially the ethics of Protestantism. The Medieval Church had viewed economic activities as subordinate to social interests and had severely limited those practices which now constitute the cornerstone of the present competitive system of business enterprise. The Protestant divines, however, from Calvin and Baxter to Pastor Bigelow and Chancellor Day, attacked the older Catholic view of economic morality and boldly proclaimed the enthusiasm of God for human thrift and pecuniary profit. The accumulation of a fortune was regarded as the form of secular enterprise which God most heartily approved. Of all the psychological forces contributing to the strength and respectability of the profit motive in economic life, this ecclesiastical approval and sanction must be regarded as the most powerful, even though the attitude seems incompatible with the basic Christian conception of the essentially transient and secondary importance of earthly affairs. Though this attitude was originally a Protestant product, the Catholic Church has become more and more tolerant of the profit economy in all areas in which modern capitalism has made any marked progress.

Many people would concede the harm done through the

clerical approval of the obsession with individual profit as the mainspring of economic life, but it would not be so readily admitted that the approval of hard work and frugality is a doctrine of dubious validity. The fact is, however, that the Protestants made labor, thrift and saving a virtue in themselves, instead of a means to a richer and more complete life here on earth. Instead of inculcating the notion of working and saving for the purpose of living they almost went so far as to give the impression that life was for the purpose of working, saving and building a fortune. Hendrik Willem Van Loon has well summarized the nature of this Protestant doctrine and its effect upon the prevalent philosophy of life in western Christendom:[3]

We live in a society which lays great stress upon the blessings of "work."

We may not realize it, but that is a very novel idea.

Animals hate exertion. All honest hunters will tell you that wild things never indulge in any form of labor for the fun of it.

They must fill their bellies and they can only get their bellies full by going through certain muscular motions, such as running or flying or swimming.

But the moment their hunger has been stilled, they are content to rest.

Of course they also need a certain amount of sexual satisfaction and they will indulge in terrific efforts to get themselves the right sort of mate.

But that urge is an occasional incident in their existence. Once their appetite along that line has been satisfied, they experience only one other emotion, the desire to be properly fed.

I have never done any hunting myself, being one of those who are quite content to let Chicago do their slaughtering for them. But as I said before all the disciples of Nimrod and the followers of the amiable Izaak inform me that a lion

[3] In C. A. Beard, *Whither Mankind?*, pp. 46-7.

with a full tummy or a snake that has properly gorged himself or a fish that has absorbed a thousand minnows becomes comparatively a harmless creature, who has no other wish but to be left severely alone that he may enjoy his leisure in solitude.

Why and how and when we ever acquired the strange philosophy of life which makes "work" one of the cardinal virtues, I do not know.

Maybe the late and inevitable Dr. John Calvin had something to do with it. That queerly biased and perverted person has a great deal to do with almost everything that concerns our daily American life.

Some day when he shall have become a mere historical curiosity, some learned person will submit the Calvinistic doctrines to a precise scientific examination and will be able to tell us at what moment "work" began to be regarded as a blessing.

The sainted Johannes probably found some basis for his dogma in Holy Writ. When one has lived long enough in the dreary town on the shores of the Lake of Geneva which was his home, one will probably be able to discover many things in the Old and New Testaments which more cheerful eyes have failed to notice.

How this obsession with work for its own sake affects a typical American community today is admirably stated by Dr. Raymond B. Fosdick in his commencement address before Smith College, printed in the New York *Times* for June 23, 1929:

But there is another reason for the dullness of Middletown which is obvious to any one who studies the community life. In Middletown everybody is busy. Idleness is a vice. To be continually busy; to fill one's days with exacting engagements, to rush from one organized activity to another—in brief, to keep going—this is the supreme virtue in Middletown. Perhaps it is a half-forgotten memory of that unhealthy Puritanical maxim that "Satan finds mischief for idle hands to do;" perhaps it is a survival of our frontier days when intense and driving activity was the price one paid to live. Whatever the

cause, there is no spirit of leisure in Middletown. There is no time to read, no time to think, no time for those genial hours of irrelevance that make for serenity and balance. Instead, everybody must continually justify his existence by doing something, by engaging in some tangible activity. One must be driving a car or telephoning or attending a meeting or going to the movies. And one does these things because every one else is doing them.

Inasmuch as the competitive system and the sanctity of individual pecuniary profits constitute the core of the present capitalistic system, it follows that the conventional Protestant Christianity invests the capitalistic order with a sanctity which makes even the rational discussion of economic reconstruction a difficult task. To question the workings of the contemporary economic order is not only economic and social heresy but almost a sin as well. In the United States, at least, the Catholic Church has certainly taken an attitude towards modern business which does not deviate markedly from the Protestant view of the situation. Chancellor Day railed against Roosevelt's mild efforts to curb some of the more outstanding abuses of contemporary capitalism and called them a "raid on prosperity." Even when a powerful church organization makes a vigorous effort to stand for social justice it meets insuperable difficulties. The chief factor leading to the dissolution of the Interchurch World Movement was its magnificent report on the Steel Strike of 1919. Further, it always meets with treason within the ranks. Bishop McConnell was the chief figure in putting through this report, but the most widely circulated attack upon it was the work of a fellow wearer of the cloth, one Pastor Bigelow.

We are not here interested in discussing the merits or defects of modern capitalism. All we desire to do in this

place is to indicate the close relationship between modern Christianity and modern capitalism and to show how the former has operated to make the task of economic and social reform more difficult to achieve. If capitalism is a divinely appointed system of economics, then it follows that the successful business man, according to modern standards, is the type more thoroughly approved of by the religionists than any other class, excepting only the clergy themselves. The progress in the deification of the successful practitioner of modern business methods has been rapid in recent years. At the opening of the present century many Americans were shocked when an eminent capitalist, Mr. Baer, stated that God had handed over the business interests of the country with complete assurance to the capitalistic class, but a quarter of a century later this view of the matter was commonly accepted gospel and the great vote piled up for Mr. Hoover in 1928 was evidence that the overwhelming majority of the American people subscribed to this attitude. The process has gone even further and today some writers have even assumed to give God and Jesus alike greater repute and respectability by identifying them with contemporary capitalism and its practices and organizations. Both God and Jesus have been frequently referred to of late as the real founders of Rotary, Kiwanis and the like. Bruce Barton, in one of the most cordially received of all books written about Jesus, pictured him in the familiar mould of a typically successful go-getter of the modern business world.

Even a number of prominent clergymen have openly and frankly protested against this tendency to create "a Wall-Street Christ." The Rev. Dr. C. Everett Wagner has well maintained that a very popular trend in modern religion "rings the cash-register," contending further that it is a "movement of sanctified commercialism, peculiarly

a product of the twentieth century." He allies himself with "the many clergymen and laymen who are thoroughly disgusted with Big Business declaring dividends on religion." Bishop Charles Fiske of the Episcopal Church protests in the same spirit that "America has become almost hopelessly enamored of a religion that is little more than sanctified commercialism. It is hard in this day to differentiate between religious aspiration and business prosperity."

Another manner in which conventional religion serves to promote economic stability and to discourage critical attitudes in the economic field is to be discovered in its providential theory of poverty and its doctrine of other worldly compensations for any failures and miseries in this mundane realm. Traditional Christianity has represented the social order as the outgrowth of divine providence, which has arranged that some shall prosper and others suffer in want. The poor are regarded as a part of the divine order, and to find fault with one's lot is to question the wisdom of God. This attitude of resignation to one's earthly condition, no matter how lowly or pinched, was made more tolerable by the Christian doctrine of compensation in heaven for any deficiencies in our earthly estate. Whatever the differences in earthly wealth, all would approach the pearly gates on terms of absolute equality, the former inhabitant of the slums rubbing ethereal elbows with the ex-residents of elaborate mundane mansions. The following quotation from Henrietta Maria Bowdler's edition of *Sermons on the Doctrines and Duties of Christianity*, cited by Kirby Page, provides a splendid statement of this typical providential theory of poverty:

> We are never taught to view this world as a state of happiness . . . Our business here is to prepare for heaven . . . Why one man was born a king, and another a beggar, is known to God alone . . . I believe it will be found that the rich are not

to be envied, and that those are happiest whom Providence has placed in an humbler station . . . It is the duty of the poor to be contented and never to murmur at the dispensations of Providence.

That this spirit still continues is evident from the statement of Mr. and Mrs. Lynd in *Middletown* that: "The minister of the largest Protestant church exhorted his congregation, 'If God has given you wealth, be happy; if He has given you poverty, be happy.' "

Not only did the church teach that poverty and misery was a matter of divine Providence; it naturally and logically refused to take an active or leading part in social reform. The greatest of all factory reformers in England in the first half of the nineteenth century, Anthony Ashley Cooper, the seventh Earl of Shaftesbury, thus commented on the attitude of the church toward his efforts at social amelioration:

I find that Evangelical religionists are not those on whom I can rely . . . To whom should I have naturally looked for the chief aid! Why, undoubtedly to the clergy, and especially those of the trading districts. Quite the reverse; from them I have received no support, or next to none. And this throughout my whole career. I have had more aid from the medical than the divine profession.

There is no doubt that this expectation of a better life in the world to come has rendered the lower classes far more docile in accepting economic oppression and exploitation than would otherwise be the case. It is doubtful as to whether the church as a whole can be accused of conscious collaboration with unscrupulous employers in exploiting this compensatory expectancy of the workers. For the most part, it is unconscious and a natural result of the ultimate otherworldly goal of orthodox Christianity. Yet, in many industrial areas where there is danger

of proletarian discontent the clergy are actively and alertly aligned with the industrial barons and preach the gospel of respect for and obedience to capitalism and its local representatives. Liberal and independent ministers find it well-nigh impossible to maintain their positions in such regions. Some of our most popular contemporary evangelists are subsidized to inveigh against the dangers of Bolshevism, which, to most of them, means anything more radical than shop unions. The Catholic Church was probably the strongest factor in defeating the child-labor amendment in the state of Massachusetts.

These religious factors which oppose social and economic justice and aid economic oppression are admirably summarized by Upton Sinclair in his too-little-read book, *The Profits of Religion.* The writer does not share Mr. Sinclair's complete trust in Socialism as an adequate economic panacea and he does not insist that everything in his book is to be regarded as beyond challenge. Yet the writer believes that the book is essentially fair and sound, and if one accepted its contents as only fifty per cent. true it would be an overwhelming indictment of conventional religion as a dignified adjunct to capitalistic cupidity.

A particularly vicious and menacing aspect of the religious obstruction of economic progress is to be seen in the opposition to birth-control. It is generally agreed by will-informed students of economics and sociology that the most important single measure which holds any hope of promoting permanent well-being in society is that of artificial restriction of the birth-rate, particularly among the working-classes. Such devices as social insurance, minimum-wage legislation, labor-organization and the like will prove of no avail if the population far outruns the economic resources and labor demand. Indeed, able students

of the population problem like Professor E. M. East predict a return to barbarism unless population growth is effectively checked within a century. Orthodox Christianity, especially Catholic Christianity, bitterly opposes birth-control. It is due to this religious opposition that we have our anti-birth-control legislation in the United States. To be sure, the church is perfectly logical in maintaining this attitude in the light of its premises. To the orthodox Christian the purpose of sex is to create souls which may be saved, and the more souls created the better. The fact that these "souls" may exist in misery here on earth is of slight importance, for their ultimate destiny is heaven. To limit the production of souls is an affront to God and a violation of his expressed command. As long as orthodoxy maintains its hold on modern society, conventional religion cannot be expected to take a favorable attitude towards birth-control.

Not only will all types of charity and social work prove ultimately futile unless accompanied by a successful campaign of birth-control, but much of modern charity is hampered in its efficiency through retaining the older Christian attitude of resignation towards social evils as a part of the scheme of Providence. The persistence of the religious attitude towards social problems has been the most powerful force in perpetuating the conception of social work as amelioration and relief rather than prevention and cure, in other words, in continuing the notion of the validity of charitable enterprise.

Another aspect of the economics of religion is the economic waste connected with the maintenance of ecclesiastical edifices and their operation. One could conceive of a type of religion for which large expenditures would be economically justifiable on the ground that the churches were rendering a very valuable social, economic and æs-

thetic service to the community, but the activities of orthodox churches in America must be regarded by candid observers as rather worse than useless. The hypothetical adjustment of man to an imaginary supernatural world and the salvation of mankind from a non-existent hell cannot be regarded as a social service of any merit whatever. The churches may incidentally offer some relief to the poor, but it is a moot question as to whether, in the long run, this sort of charity is not socially disastrous. By 1926 the annual expenditures of religious bodies in America for salaries, repairs, payments on debts and benevolences was $814,370,000. To this sum should be added the large donations to the cause of foreign missions. The writer of these lines is well known to be a person of pacifist leanings who earnestly deplores our present excessive expenditures for modern armaments, but it is certainly more justifiable to expend large sums of money to protect ourselves against potential earthly enemies, than to appropriate infinitely greater amounts to protect ourselves from wholly imaginary enemies in the postulated spirit world. We may be in no great danger from Japan or Great Britain, but they certainly menace us far more than the devil. In 1926 the value of church edifices was $3,842,500,000. These are free from taxation, though they benefit by all sorts of public expenditures such as fire protection, transportation facilities, police protection and the like. Probably no other step would be followed with such definitive practical consequences as the reasonable taxation of church property. In addition to the churches we must consider the parochial schools which are maintained at great expense by the faithful, though in many cases the parents can ill afford to make the necessary contributions. The annual expenditures in America today for the purpose of adjusting Americans to supernatural powers certainly

total far more than a billion dollars. One can scarcely refrain from remarking upon what might be done with this money if wisely and directly expended for the secular betterment of mankind, or even used to support modernized religious cults and organizations whose aims are chiefly related to social improvement and æsthetic appreciation.

6. The Menace of Religion to Sound Sexology

There is no doubt that supernatural religion has been more harmful in its influence upon sex and the family than upon any other set of human practices and institutions. Christianity has insisted upon judging and handling sex with reference to supernatural and otherworldly considerations instead of viewing it from the standpoint of human happiness here and now. Sex activities are held to exist almost exclusively for the purpose of creating souls rather than for increasing the pleasure and well-being of mankind. Sex life is regarded as at best a necessary evil to fulfil certain theological aspirations. Indeed, by its attitude towards sex, Christianity has almost succeeded in converting it into an actual evil. By refusing to recognize and distinguish clearly between the pleasure aspects and procreative function of sex, the religionists have brought about a condition in which we fail miserably in carrying out either of these aspects of sexual behavior.

By envisaging sex as an evil, one of the most noble and important types of human expression has been robbed of much of its buoyancy, beauty and energizing qualities. What this has meant can best be discerned from a comparison of sex life among the ancient Greeks with that among conventional American Christians. The evil effects of this religious attitude towards sex are legion. Hundreds of thousands of nervous invalids and neurotic individuals are produced through excessive sex abstinence or inade-

quate knowledge of sex requirements. Many families are rendered unhappy and unstable through lack of preparation for sex activity on the part of one or both members of the family, more frequently the women. The sexual coldness engendered in multitudes of women through the inculcation of the Christian conception of virtue and sin and the base nature of sex is not only the cause of a vast amount of individual unhappiness but the source of extensive marital discord. Great numbers of unhappy and maladjusted families are kept formally and legally intact by virtue of our barbarous divorce laws which rest for their sanction almost wholly upon the Christian view of sex. This produces a state of affairs which is degrading and demoralizing to parents and children alike. Along with our criminal procedure, our divorce laws are the chief scandal in the whole fossil bed of contemporary jurisprudence.

We have already mentioned the effect of religion in opposing birth-control knowledge, with the resulting tremendous volume of misery, poverty and inadequate education due to the presence of too many children in the family. The church has thus condemned countless millions of women to what is essentially slavery of mind and body. Another lamentable situation is closely associated with this clerical opposition to birth-control, namely, the outlawing of abortions. No sensible person will defend abortion as a practice except as a last resort. The prevention of conception is greatly to be preferred. At the same time, no person with a modern and rational outlook can well pretend that it is better to bear an unwanted or excess child than to have resort to an abortion. Now abortions are among the safest and most painless of all known operations, provided they are performed by competent medical specialists under favorable conditions. The legislation pro-

moted by the religious attitude towards the creation of souls has made abortions a criminal offense, with the result that these operations are performed surreptitiously by untrained persons, like midwives, or by trained physicians operating under conditions which greatly increase the pain and risk. Consequently, abortions are accompanied by indescribable pain and a high mortality, estimated by competent authorities as one in fifty. In Soviet Russia the mortality from surreptitious abortions was, for a three year average, one death to twenty abortions. The price that is paid for the operation of the Christian supernaturalism and impurity-complex in this field alone may be estimated on the basis of the fact that excellent authorities place the number of abortions per year in New York City alone at 80,000. As an indication of the essential safety of abortions, when legalized and performed under favorable medical conditions, we may state that out of some 55,000 abortions performed in Soviet Russia under state supervision not one fatality has resulted.

To the influence of religion upon sex must also be assigned the prevalence and ravages of venereal diseases which, in their direct and indirect effects, are probably more widespread and serious than is realized by even the average Puritan fanatic. There is no type of disease more easy to combat and control than the venereal diseases and they could be practically eliminated in a generation or two of concerted effort at venereal prophylaxis. The endeavor of the religionists to frighten people out of sexual intercourse, instead of preparing them to indulge safely and decently, is the chief obstacle to the progress of preventive medicine and therapeutic success in this realm of pathology.

The effect of orthodox religion in contributing to the

existence and frequency of mental and nervous diseases is truly appalling. Our numerous and densely populated public and private hospitals for the insane are filled for the most part with those suffering from disorders which are derived from the effects of an unintelligent and uninformed attitude towards sex. The leading types of functional insanity: the serious psycho-neuroses, dementia-praecox, manic-depressive insanity and paranoia are due in differing degrees to sexual maladjustments and parental attachments or antipathies. They would be to a considerable degree preventable in a society where sex education of an intelligent sort was possible. Paresis, the most widely prevalent form of organic psychosis, and locomotor-ataxia, the most frequent type of organic neurosis, are invariably caused by syphilis, which is an easily preventable disease and could be speedily eradicated were it not for the opposition to venereal prophylaxis growing out of our impurity-complex. Then there is the large group of epileptics, whose condition could be greatly improved by adequate sex education and the resulting rehabilitation of the personality. Moreover, we must not overlook the vast number of neurotic and psycho-neurotic individuals in society, many of them persons of superior innate capacity, whose happiness is diminished, energy depleted and creative powers sapped by the repression of their natural impulses beyond the point where the most heroic efforts at sublimation can meet their needs. Finally, there are the large number of feeble-minded individuals who constitute a great economic, social and cultural burden. Their number could be greatly reduced by the introduction of those sterilization and eugenic measures which are opposed by the pure-minded and orthodox clericals.

7. How Religion Affects Education

The deleterious effects of traditional religion upon education are numerous. In the first place, the vestiges of the old religious attitude towards life and character have perpetuated a vicious educational philosophy based upon punitive and penitential ideals. Life is regarded as a harsh and solemn affair and education is looked upon as a process of disciplining one's will through assigning unpleasant and irksome tasks and insisting upon their execution. This attitude has delayed the recognition of the psychological truism that interest is the only possible cornerstone of a dynamic and successful system of education. Moreover, our attitude towards the young is still deeply colored by the old patriarchal ideals of the Bible. Primary stress is still laid on compelling children to honor their elders instead of attempting to provoke curiosity, tolerance, sympathy and insight on the part of parents.

The most serious menace of religion to education is to be found, of course, in the introduction of religious considerations into the determination of the objectives, subject-matter and methods of education. Instruction in the mysteries of man's supposed relations to the supernatural world, as conceived by the orthodox, must be regarded as something worse than wasted pedagogical effort. It is nothing less than the reprehensible inculcation of superstitions which have increased human unhappiness and impeded the progress of mankind for many milleniums. This direct religious blight upon education is to be found most extensively in the Catholic parochial schools; not because the orthodox Protestants have developed more enlightened dogmas or pedagogy than the Catholics but rather on account of the far greater success of the Catholics in maintaining schools under religious auspices and in in-

ducing Catholic parents in large numbers to send their children to these parochial schools.

The first deplorable result of education carried on under religious auspices is the development of an intellectual attitude of credulity and docility. Children are taught to accept statements on authority, and a skeptical and inquiring outlook is discouraged. This makes it practically impossible for children educated in such an atmosphere as that of the Catholic parochial school to participate in any life of intellectual adventure. Along with the attitude of credulity towards the dogmas of the cult dispensing the instruction goes an inevitable intolerance with respect to contrary opinions and the dogmas of other groups. A sophisticated and tolerant outlook is thus discouraged and any possibility of freedom of thought completely precluded. Again, the type of instruction given in these religious schools is highly archaic. Religious elements play a large part, the secular curriculum is sadly out of date, and very little attention is given to a study of the physical world or of contemporary society in the light of modern scientific methods and results. Indeed, science is not only neglected; there is an effort made to discredit its claims and to represent it as decisively subordinate to religion as a source of truth and enlightenment.

The nature of the curriculum in such institutions of learning means that there is a vast amount of waste in these pedagogical efforts. Much of the instruction imparted is essentially useless to a person inhabiting the secular society of the second quarter of the twentieth century and not a little of the information set forth is distinctly worse than worthless and constitutes a definite handicap in life to those who have been affected by it. The writer is no apologist for the modernity or efficiency of our public schools, but it is difficult to see how any in-

formed person can deny that they disseminate a brand of education which is much closer in touch with up-to-date educational psychology and the facts of modern life than the instruction given in the Catholic parochial schools. We are willing freely to concede that, granting their premises and objectives, the Catholic schools come far closer to realizing their goal than the public schools. Our position is that the basic objectives of Catholic education cannot be defended in the light of our present knowledge and intellectual perspective. Such institutions as the Catholic parochial schools are not only an economic and pedagogical liability; they are maintained in considerable part at the price of poverty and suffering on the part of the Catholic parents who support them. The author of the striking article on "What It Means to Marry a Catholic" in the *Forum* for June, 1929, thus graphically summarizes the financial impact of the parochial school upon the average Catholic family which sends children to such institutions:

> To contribute according to one's means to the support of the pastors is one of the six chief commandments of the Catholic Church, a violation of which constitutes a "mortal sin"—enough to deprive one of all hope of heaven. The parochial school is looked upon as one of the legitimate expenses of the pastor; and the common interpretation of "according to one's means" shows a lack of any sense of proportion on the part of the clergy and many of the laity. In the matter of forcing contributions to the parish schools the church does not rely entirely on the conscience of individual adherents, but again resorts to the powerful club of group opinion. In most parishes it is a practice—and one without which it would be futile to appeal to conscience—to publish at regular intervals the exact amount each member of the congregation has given to the support of church and school. Disgrace befalls a person whose name appeals on the monthly list with a contribution considered too small.
>
> I can hardly speak of my own situation without voicing re-

bellion against this economic crime the Catholic hierarchy is committing. Our income is far above that of the average Catholic family, but because the monthly payment toward our parish school always comes first with my husband—as it does with thousands of other parents—we have little left for anything beyond the bare necessities of life. Yet for ten years we have contributed enough at least for us to employ a girl to help us with the housework, and to buy books, magazines, and other aids to our children's recreation and education which now we cannot have. As it is, I plod along at dishwashing, cooking, cleaning, and mending; by evening I am usually too tired and too perturbed to sit down and read with my children, to help them in preparing their lessons, or to play games with them in the home which I had always meant to make for them the most attractive place on earth. I refer to these personal grievances only to illustrate my point and to sketch the difficulties of any person who marries a Catholic without considerable means.

The parochial school nuisance promises to become worse rather than better. The Catholic clergy are becoming more audacious, irresponsible and unscrupulous than ever in attempting to bulldoze their parishioners into sending their children to parochial schools. With increasing frequency we read of Catholic bishops denouncing the public schools in what would be regarded in a Socialist as a very "un-American" manner. The New York *Times* for September 1, 1929, announced that Cardinal O'Connell had proclaimed that Catholic mothers in his jurisdiction would be denied absolution if they withheld their children from parochial schools.

A widely prevalent and threatening type of religious obstruction to education is to be found in the attacks upon the teaching of those aspects of natural science which are contrary to the dogmas of orthodoxy.

The newspapers made us familiar with the Tennessee scandal which centered around the Scopes Trial of the

summer of 1925, but this was only one link in an extensive chain of attacks upon modern biology. This religious assault upon modernized education has been made the subject of a large book entitled *The War on Modern Science* by Maynard Shipley, President of the Science League of America. Mr. Shipley, in his pamphlet on "The War Against Evolution," presents the following excellent summary of the situation today:

Since 1921, when active opposition to the teaching of modern science first developed, 30 state legislatures have faced bills to outlaw the teaching of evolution. Two of these bills —in Tennessee and Mississippi—were successful, and are now the law of those states, the Tennessee law having been declared constitutional by its Supreme Court.

In four other states, anti-evolution bills have passed the lower house but have been killed in the senate. In Arkansas the first anti-evolution *initiative measure* in history carried almost two to one, and is now in force.

In several other states, the teaching of evolution has been practically abolished by rulings of Boards of Education, legislative resolutions, or censorship by Text Book Commissions.

Many teachers have lost their positions (in several cases large sections of college faculties have been dismissed *en masse*) because they taught—or in some cases merely believed in—the theory of evolution.

Books on evolution have been publicly burned in three states, and state-appointed committees of Fundamentalists have "purged" college libraries of scientific works.

The anti-evolutionists have formed huge, well-financed organizations for the specific purpose of attacking science teaching and research, have issued innumerable books and pamphlets, and maintain a "Flying Squadron" of anti-evolution orators. One of the most prominent of their leaders has stated that he alone raised a fund of $600,000 in one year for "the cause."

Legislative and extra-legislative attacks on the teaching of evolution are growing, and not decreasing, in prevalence, with the progress of time, and have spread from the south to all other parts of the country.

In the words of one of the principal Fundamentalist spokesmen, "the fight has just begun."

The war on the teaching of evolution has been accompanied by a similar assault upon the teaching of the facts about the nature and authorship of the Bible, in other words instruction in the elements of Biblical criticism. In some states, for example Oklahoma, there has even been an effort to outlaw the teaching of the economic interpretation of history on the ground that it is contrary to biblical doctrines and is a sinister device for propagating atheistic materialism.

The religious background of education also produces an attitude in regard to the conduct and control of the educational process which thoroughly impairs the existence of freedom, responsibility and adventure in the academic atmosphere. It produces in the minds of parents a conception that moral propriety, viewed in the old sense, is more important than intellectual development. What they desire is not so much that their children shall develop the inquiring mind or acquire a large body of well assorted facts which will fit them for living in the modern age, but rather that their children shall be protected from dangerous doctrines and from social situations of a novel and challenging type. Therefore, educational institutions, particularly those of a residential sort, tend to become academic jails, or places where children may be kept safely insulated from modern thought and conduct. It is hardly necessary to emphasize the fact that nothing could well be more disastrous than this to the realization of the function of education as a mode of preparing persons for a vivid and realistic participation in actual life processes.

This protective element growing out of the religious view of life and morals has a number of serious negative results in education, most important of which is probably

the almost complete elimination of sex education from the curriculum. There is no phase of education more vital for human happiness than adequate information in regard to the facts and activities connected with the sexual function. The obscurantic attitude towards sex brought about by conventional religion has placed an effective taboo upon adequate and realistic sex education even in the colleges. One of the things most perfectly designed to create an attitude of disgust and of despair on the part of a liberally-minded person has been the public furor in regard to the circulation of sex-questionnaires in American colleges and universities in recent years. A popular teacher in one of our larger public school systems was recently dismissed for allowing a student to read and criticize the sceptical interpretation of the new morality in George Jean Nathan's *Land of the Pilgrim's Pride.* Such instruction as is imparted in this field is usually grossly distorted and devoted to terrifying the pupils with respect to the alleged horrible results of unconventional sex behavior. Therefore, students are turned out of our schools and colleges with either no information whatever in regard to one of the most important fields of human behavior or possessed only of a modicum of information which is usually worse than useless.

8. Religion and Journalism

Religion is not without many and divers evil effects in the field of modern journalism. Perhaps the most serious result here is the power of religious organizations to intimidate the press and prevent the publication of material damaging to the cause of orthodoxy. It is well-nigh impossible to secure any publicity for facts unfavorable to the Catholic Church or Catholic officials in prominent papers outside the more notably anti-Catholic southern states. Catholicism, far more than capitalism, is the lead-

ing sacred cow of contemporary American journalism. The Mormons and Christian Scientists also have a power out of all proportion to their numerical significance in the American population. Newspaper editors hesitate to publish material reflecting upon either of these cults. Still further, there is a general disinclination on the part of the press to give publicity to opinions and facts which seriously challenge the tenets of orthodoxy. At the same time extensive space is given to the pronouncements of orthodox clergymen and others sharing the traditional view of life. Only when heterodox ideas have unusual and conspicuous news value will the general run of papers in America open their columns with alacrity to dissident views. This averseness of the press to full and frank publication of a critical attitude towards religion makes it difficult to bring up-to-date religious views before the great mass of the American public.

A far less serious effect of religion on modern journalism, but one of real economic and intellectual import, is the production and distribution of a great number of cheap religious magazines and papers designed to advance the point of view of particular religious organizations and cults and to attack the dogmas and practices of competing cults, as well as the activities of scientists and critical scholars. We might cite as illustrations such publications as *America*, *Columbia*, and a host of less repute on the Catholic side, and the *Menace* and similar sheets from the Protestant camp. These publications disseminate and perpetuate ignorance, superstition and prejudice, thus serving to keep the nation divided and benighted.

9. Religion and Art

One of the most thoroughly accepted of traditional views is that religion has been a tremendous impulse to art and that without the religious factor art could not

thrive. There is no doubt whatever that in primitive times art sprang in large part from religion, because of the close interrelationship between religion and all other types of primitive life. Art and ritual were particularly closely related to religion in primitive and early historic times, as Jane Harrison and others have clearly and graphically indicated. Throughout the history of art religious themes have been prominent, and in periods like the Middle Ages art revolved chiefly about religious subjects. To concede such facts is, however, far different from admitting that religion is indispensable to art or provides the best possible medium in which art can flourish. The two periods in the history of art which stand out above all others for the volume and excellence of artistic achievement, Attic and Hellenistic paganism and the Italian Renaissance, were ages which were conspicuous for their secular interests. Further, much of the so-called religious art revolves about such themes as the sinfulness and unworthiness of man, the crucifixion and sufferings of Jesus, the martyrdom and tortures of the saints and other equally unhealthy and depressing topics. One can scarcely fail to contrast these with the vitality, buoyancy and joy of life evident in the artistic products of classical paganism. One cannot deny the high technical proficiency reached by the painters of religious themes and the sculptors of religious groups. But one may well raise the question as to what would have been the result if an equal degree of energy and devotion had been expended upon pleasing and stimulating secular subjects. It must be pointed out, of course, that nothing could be more absurd than to imagine that medieval Catholicism created a veritable populace of artists. Those who actually took part in artistic creations were, in a numerical sense, a negligible minority of the whole population. The great majority of the medieval peasants and proletariat

had as little appreciation of art as the poor whites of the south in the United States today.

The religious art upon which we have just been commenting is of course Catholic art. Protestantism has unquestionably been much more disastrous in its influence upon art than Catholicism. The solemnity characteristic of the religious attitude towards life is fundamentally opposed to the truly artistic or æsthetic outlook. The solemnity-complex has certainly been far more characteristic of Protestantism than of Catholicism in actual practice. The puritanic strains in Protestantism have been one of the most decisively anti-æsthetic influences in the history of civilization. Solemnity has been, of course, closely associated with the impurity-complex and prudery. Therefore, many of the themes, particularly those related to matters of sex and the female body, which best lend themselves to creative artistic endeavor, have been tabooed by religion. The opposition to dynamic secular themes in art has, of course, gone beyond criticism of painting and sculpture and has affected music, literature and the drama as well.

While Protestantism has been decidedly more puritanical than Catholicism in the past, this distinction is breaking down. In America today the Catholics are fast overtaking the Methodists and Baptists in this respect, though they have not yet adopted the sabbatarian excesses of the latter. Today Catholic churchmen speak much more frequently than the Protestant clergy against the immodesty of contemporary female attire and the sex emancipation of the younger generation. In short, Catholicism seems to be going puritan. We cannot fairly judge the impact of Catholicism on art at the present time by reference to the æsthetic tastes and moral outlook of Renaissance popes and cardinals.

The religious attack upon art emerges most immediately and obviously in the form of censorship. In our generation we have witnessed even such absurd performances as Anthony Comstock's attempt to suppress the highly virtuous and innocent painting, *September Morn*, the closing of theaters exhibiting such plays as Oscar Wilde's *Sappho*, and the suppression of highly artistic literary productions such as Miss Hall's *Well of Loneliness*. These are only a few representative examples chosen from tens of thousands of similar occurrences. In 1928 almost every book of striking merit produced during the literary season was banned in the city of Boston, and in 1929 a bookseller faced a prison term for the public sale of Theodore Dreiser's *American Tragedy*. In short, the conventional religious attitude is fundamentally opposed to art, at least to art of a secular nature. This is due in part to the supernatural orientation and the personal solemnity of orthodoxy and in part to the fact that religion judges art, not from the standpoint of truth and beauty but rather from the point of view of its relationship to conventional religious and moral ideals and standards.

We have in the preceding pages presented a brief summary of some outstanding ways in which orthodox Christianity today lessens human happiness and impedes human progress. We hope that we have succeeded in showing beyond any possibility of doubt that religion is not merely a theme for abstract theological and metaphysical discussion, which may and should be ignored by the student of social problems or the practical man of affairs. Many may contend that the writer has in this chapter set forth the product of many years of malicious compiling of the evil effects of religion, ignoring potential benefits of religion through the ages. The fact is, however, that the writer has actually made no pretense of dealing in any sense fully and

completely with the menace of orthodoxy in present-day civilization. What he has set forth is the briefest sort of summary. It would be possible to write a book larger than the present treatise devoted to the evil effects of religion in one single field of human endeavor such as economics, sex or education. Further, the writer fully concedes the past services of religion in leading man to feel more secure in the presence of the supposed dangers lurking in the hypothetical supernatural world. Yet it is necessary to remember that the contributions of religion to human life in a long past age of ignorance and superstition cannot be invoked in defense of religion today, when the fear of the supernatural cannot be justified or defended. Further, the writer is perfectly well aware that the Methodist Church, for example, has harbored at the same time both a Chancellor Day and a Bishop McConnell. It is no indication of lack of appreciation of the modernity and courage of the latter to call attention to the social menace embodied in the religion of the former. Indeed, the discrediting of the beliefs of a Chancellor Day is the best possible assurance of the growing influence of the religion of a Bishop McConnell.

III. ORTHODOXY AS THE MOB POLICEMAN

Many who would concede the accuracy of the above indictment of conventional religion nevertheless maintain that we must conserve and perpetuate orthodoxy, since traditional religion is the great mob policeman. Without the coercive influence of religion, they hold, society would soon disintegrate into anarchy, violence and rapine. The moralizing influence of orthodox religion, however, which we usually take for granted, is by no means a demonstrated fact. As early as the seventeenth century the Deists and other liberal religionists observed that some of

the most law-abiding citizens were those who proclaimed themselves atheists. The unreliability and selfishness of most ostentatiously pious persons is notorious. The fact is, however, that we have only recently made any thorough-going studies of the actual effect of religion upon conduct which might enable us to speak with some precision about this matter. Such information as has been gathered by scientists would seem to discredit the conventional notion that orthodoxy powerfully promotes such desirable moral traits as honesty, reliability, unselfishness and the like. Professor Leuba, in a recent statistical inquiry, showed that the great majority of prominent American academicians and men of science had discarded orthodoxy but it will be conceded even by those most critical of the intelligentsia that the professorial class is distinguished for its docile and law-abiding behavior.

It is obvious that the only way in which we can arrive at any finality of judgment on this subject is to carry on a prolonged series of psychological investigations into the actual processes of character formation, in order that we may ascertain the relative influence of religion therein. Such a project is now under way under the auspices of the Institute of Social and Religious Research in New York City. The investigation is being directed by Professor Hugh Hartshorne of Columbia and Professor Mark A. May of Yale University. Their first volume, *Studies in Deceit* indicated that orthodox religious training, either Christian or Jewish, did not promote honesty and reliability. On the other hand, children who have been exposed to progressive educational methods, based upon secular premises and the exploitation of modern psychology, appeared to have a far better record as to honesty and dependability than those who had been brought up under the influence of religious orthodoxy and the old-fashioned

pedagogy. At the meeting of the International Congress of Psychology in New Haven in September, 1929, Professor P. R. Hightower reported the results of an elaborate test of more than three thousand children. He showed definitely that the tendency of the children tested to lie, cheat and the like was in direct proportion—not in inverse ratio—to their knowledge of the Bible and scriptural precepts. He concluded that: "mere knowledge of the Bible of itself is not sufficient to insure proper character attitudes." At the same meeting Professor T. H. Howells reported that orthodox college students seemed less capable to deal with intellectual problems than the liberals, and much more susceptible to irrational suggestion. All that we now know of modern psychology and pedagogy inclines one to support the belief that secular education and psychology, devoted immediately and directly to moral training, will be much more powerful influences in the building of character than religious orthodoxy. In short, the final rampart in the defense of religion namely, its indispensability as the mob policeman appears to be one which we must abandon in the light of modern knowledge.

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Chapter III

HOW MANKIND GOT RELIGION

The dim and shadowy outlines of the superhuman deity fade slowly away from before us; and as the mist of his presence floats aside, we perceive with greater and greater clearness the shape of a grander and nobler figure—of Him who made all Gods and shall unmake them. From the dim dawn of history, and from the inmost depths of every soul, the face of our Father Man looks out upon us with the fire of eternal youth in his eyes, and says, "Before Jehovah was, I am!"

(William Kingdon Clifford)

I. SOME DEFINITIONS

Before proceeding to discuss the nature and history of religion we should submit at least a few preliminary definitions. We must not accept the various modern sophisticated attitudes toward religion as an accurate interpretation of what religion has meant through the ages. Who, for example, could have any quarrel with religion when defined as Professor Edward Scribner Ames defines it, namely, as the search for, and realization of, the highest conceivable social values. If one identifies religion with all social decency and justice one creates a conception of religion which is necessarily highly attractive, but it is not equally accurate as a historical picture of the nature and practices of religion nor is it a reliable description of organized religion today.

It may well be that religion can be so transformed that it will become a great organized moral incentive to the im-

provement of the secular happiness of man, but this is not what religion has involved in the past. Whatever religion may become in the future, it has always been man's interpretation of the nature and import of the hypothetical supernatural world. It has, of course, included the resulting efforts which man has made to avail himself of the supposedly beneficent intervention of certain supernatural powers and to ward off the assumed malevolent influences of other supernatural powers. In other words, religion has been man's effort to adjust himself to the supernatural world in such a manner as to secure the maximum benefits and the minimum disasters therefrom.

So much for the religion of the past and the religion of certainly seventy-five per cent. of active communicants in the United States today. There are many who contend that religion will surrender its interest in the supernatural world and concern itself almost solely with the improvement of man in his earthly and secular relations. Religion will become the great dynamic impulse in the field of social ethics. The writer is willing to concede the possibility of this transformation of religion and would certainly welcome such a development. At the same time, it is necessary to recognize that there is little or nothing in common between a technique for the successful adjustment of man to the supernatural world and a secular impulse to social betterment. This has led many to suggest that we should abandon the term religion as applied to the more advanced secular cults of today and tomorrow, and there is obviously much to be said in favor of this recommendation. The chief thing to be said in defense of retaining the term religion is that it may make the transition from supernaturalism to secularism somewhat easier and more acceptable.

By science one means nothing more or less than the search for truth by the most perfect methods of observa-

tion available at any given time. Science is not in any sense an entity in itself but is merely an ever improving method of seeking the truth. Some forty distinguished scientists meeting in Washington in 1923 offered a very satisfactory definition of science. They described it as: "The developing without prejudice or preconception of any kind a knowledge of the facts, the laws, and the processes of nature." Even more briefly one could define science as the effort to ascertain truth by the method of observation and experimentation. This would cover social as well as natural science.

The crude, awkward and credulous methods of a primitive scientist differ widely from the complicated technique of a Millikan investigating the phenomena of cosmic rays, but both are scientists in any reasonable interpretation of the term science. There can, therefore, be no legitimate conflict with science, except on the part of those who have goals and objectives other than the conquest of truth.

No sensible person contends that the methods of science have as yet attained perfection or that the facts thus far brought forth by science represent a complete and unchallengeable body of knowledge. Any reasonable person will concede that the methods of science will improve and that science will accumulate an ever larger body of more or less accurate and reliable facts. Further, one must recognize that science is only a human methodology and must therefore be circumscribed by the limitations of the agent carrying on its methods. It can never develop a prowess beyond the powers of mankind. To hope that we may ultimately attain through science something approximating divine omniscience is to misunderstand both the nature of science and of man. Certain religionists have complained that the present age is making a religion, or even a god, out of science. Even if this be true, the writer can see no

serious objection to such a tendency. To make a god out of the search for truth would constitute a vast advance in theistic evolution.

There is a frequent tendency to limit science to a study of the physical universe and the nature and processes of organic life, in other words, to make science identical with natural science. Such a limitation on science cannot be sustained. Anything is scientific which involves the search for truth according to the best methods available in the particular premises. Therefore, a well trained philologist is as much a scientist as Einstein, and an objective sociologist quite as much of a scientist as Eddington. Indeed, one could legitimately include within the field of science the artist who is in quest of truth and beauty. We recognize, of course, that the precision of method and degree of control of data differ markedly as between the astronomer or physicist on the one hand and the social scientist or artist on the other, but, in so far as all of them are seeking the truth by the best methods of observation available in their respective fields, they are to that degree scientific.

II. PHASES OF THE RELIGIOUS COMPLEX

It is impossible to define religion and religious activities as a single unified body of thought and practice. Religious experience, Dr. Goldenweiser correctly contends, falls into at least three major phases: (1) the emotional thrill which arises out of the sense of the mysterious character of the hypothetical supernatural world; (2) the activational or ritualistic operations which represent man's reaction to the stimulus of this emotional thrill, chiefly magic and worship; and (3) the conceptual aspects, which constitute man's rationalization of the meaning and value of the religious thrill and of his subsequent behavior

in response to this thrill. In its developed historic form this third aspect of the religious complex is usually known as theology.

A number of theories have been offered to explain the origins and nature of this emotional thrill from the hypothesis of a supernatural world. The older anthropologists, such as Müller, Spencer, Tylor, Lang, Avebury and others, explained it on the basis of nature worship, ghost worship, ancestor worship, and animism, meaning by the latter the notion of the universal animation and personification of nature. More recently anthropologists have assigned the origin of the religious thrill to man's first vague conception of a force or power in the world outside him—the supposed supernatural world. In other words, as Professor Shotwell expresses it, man apprehended some mysterious power or force in the universe, but did not comprehend its real meaning, thus leaving in his mind a thrill-provoking mystery:[1]

> Fortunately students are agreed upon the elements [in the religious complex] that are constant: they are, in the last analysis, two—*emotion* and *mystery*. Religion, in the most general terms, is the reaction of mankind to something apprehended, but not comprehended. It involves two distinct elements: the object which stimulates and the psychic life which responds. . . . Religion, then, from savage to civilized, has this in common—that it is, on the one hand, the state of feeling awakened in a man by the sense, in and around him, of mysteries; and, on the other hand, those feelings, actions, customs, and thoughts which that sense produces, and which serve to bring him into relation to them. These things are essentials, as much in the modern world as in the origins of civilization. This is the statement in most general terms of what all of us think of religion. . . .
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> The thrill from the mysterious is, therefore, the first phenomenon of religion. But it is something more. Thrill is stimu-

[1] Shotwell, *The Religious Revolution of Today*, pp. 74-5, 82-3, 86.

lation, and the emotions that are awakened are the nurseries of thought. The reaction extends beyond the stirring of feelings; it sets going the motor forces of the whole psychic world. The potency in the un-understood, from the savage sense of danger in the uncanny to the Christian experience of the grace of God, has been the main generating, creative element in the evolution of thought, as well as the awakener of emotion. It has, therefore, been the major stimulus in both religion and science. . . . The major attitudes of religion are emotional; those of science intellectual. There is intellectual effort in religion, to be sure, but it is secondary to the emotional. We are often confused upon this point. Simply because theology deals with religion is no reason for regarding it as always religious. Criticism is an attitude of science, not of religion—religion in the historic sense at least. Reverent criticism may fall within the realm of religion, but it is the reverence which makes it religious, not the criticism. Religion accepts the mystery, treasures the thrills. Science moves into the mystery's very heart, and it recognizes no taboos.

No one doubts the reality and existence of ghost worship, animal worship, phallic worship, the worship of manifestations and products of nature and the well-nigh universal development of what Dr. Tylor called animism. These were, however, later developments out of the original raw material of the basic hypothesis of mysterious but potent supernatural power. This power was not personified. It existed in generalized form and produced those activities of nature which primitive man could not explain on a matter-of-fact and secular basis. This means that it was responsible for about everything in the experience of early man. In due time he came to visualize and interpret this assumed supernatural power in terms of his own daily life and his human experiences. Once he did this he was well on his way towards the creation of spirits, gods, devils and organized cults. We shall, in a later portion of the chapter, briefly describe this evolution of re-

ligious conceptions and practices out of the primordial basis of the belief in unpersonified supernatural power, namely, out of man's reaction to those things which he apprehended but did not comprehend.

The famous French sociologist, Emile Durkheim, has suggested a sociological explanation of the religious thrill in his *Elementary Forms of Religious Life*. He suggests that when primitive people come together in crowds to carry out their religious rites and festivities they become excited and greatly stimulated because of the heightened suggestibility produced by the crowd-psychological state. They become affected by a virtual mob psychology. Primitive man, not being a crowd-psychologist, did not recognize the real naturalistic source of his thrills and his increasing sense of power. He therefore assigned them to the intervention and influence of the gods or spirits which he had assembled to worship or placate. Durkheim, therefore, ascribes the origin of religion to primitive ignorance and the resulting misinterpretation of the psychic effect of the crowd upon man.

A broader and rather more tenable sociological theory of the origin of religion and the nature of the religious thrill has been set forth by Lester F. Ward and Frank H. Hankins. Writers of this school of interpretation define religion as loyalty to the social values of the herd, and the religious thrill arises from the satisfaction derived from psychic *rapport* with the group. Professor Hankins has thus forcibly set forth this view of the nature of religion: [2]

> From the standpoint of the psychology of the matter, religion is in its essence an attitude of loyalty and devotion to some good or value deemed greater than one's own convenience, pleasure or even life. Religion may be defined broadly as the self-denying devotion of the individual to those social

[2] From unpublished manuscript.

values which his social tradition has taught him to cherish as sacredly entwined with the welfare of his group. Few men there be who are not thus to some extent religious. Man is a gregarious animal and throughout countless ages has carried on his struggle for life in groups. There is consequently in his nature an instinctive subordination to and loyalty to whatever represents his group and is sacredly identified with its permanence. These things become his God. The late Lester F. Ward defined religion as "the group sentiment of safety." From the Australian "Black Fellows" and the African Bushmen to the modern Harvard graduate, men show a spontaneous readiness to live or to die for those super-values which their training and the pressures of the group attitudes about them have led them to cherish as the supreme values of life. It could not be otherwise with a herd animal. There are, to be sure, individuals—more or less non-social—who lack this capacity for spontaneous devotion; they are the traitors, the war-time profiteers, the renegades, the selfish exploiters of popular weakness and superstition. They are found in all times, places and professions, and their number is no doubt increased by the cunicism and skepticism of the current age. And yet the mass of men remain instinctively and incurably religious, as just defined. . . .

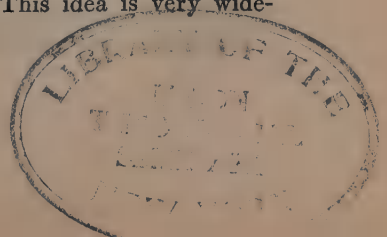
It is this loyalty to great causes which lifts man out of himself and produces that divine afflatus of soul which seems like the very visitation of God. Religion roots in the craving of the individual for harmony, for unity, for solidarity with his group. One of the deepest religious motivations is the desire for completeness, for the elimination of a sense of incompleteness, and insufficiency. It was never intended that man should live alone. He must hide himself in the ranks of the herd and feel all about him its soothing and comforting presence, like the lost sheep which on recovery rushes into the center of the flock and thus allays its fears and restores the calm and peace of confidence. Solitary confinement is the most cruel of all punishments and isolation from one's own social group the most bitter of all humiliations. The vast majority of men everywhere, consequently, live close to what is for them the orthodox way, the straight and narrow way, which maintains a sense of worthiness in the sight of their

fellows and hence of solidarity with their chosen fellowship. It is the consciousness of broken harmony that produces the sense of guilt, the gnawings of conscience, the conviction of sin. And it is the restoration of this harmony, very often by way of confession and tears, that produces the peace that passeth understanding. These phenomena are observable on every hand, in the family, the fraternity, the lodge, the party, the church, or whatever constitutes a social group dependent upon loyalty to social ideals and values.

Another important contribution to the explanation of the religious thrill in certain well developed world religions has been offered recently by the dynamic psychologists such as Everett Dean Martin. Such writers call attention to the tendency of children to project into their interpretation of the supernatural world the psychological attitudes of awe, trust, fear and dependence which they have built up towards their earthly parents. In answer to the insistent inquiry of the child into problems of causation the mother tells her offspring that God "made" things, and then explains that God is "our Father in Heaven." The thrills derived from the earthly family therefore become, by process of projection and association, inseparably intertwined with the religious thrills which come from the supernatural world which is thus interpreted in terms of the domestic complex. This psycho-analytical interpretation of the religious thrill and the religious experience is so important that it will be worth quoting some of the more essential conceptions and mechanisms as they are described by Dr. Martin:[3]

I am dwelling on this symbolic character of religious ideas and beliefs because it is in the symbols that we must discover the psychological meaning of the matter of redemption from sin. Chiefly important among the symbols of religion is the idea of the "Heavenly Father." This idea is very wide-

[3] E. D. Martin, *Psychology*, Part XV.



spread in religion because it reflects a universal human experience, the child-parent relationship. Psychopathologists are in the habit of looking at this child-parent relationship as one of the main sources of the phenomena of the unconscious. It is no mere accident that men speak of the Deity as Father. This is a common practice, both Christian and Jewish. The child in its early years looks upon his Father as an ideal person. The father is strong, he is wise; in his presence there is security from all harm; he provides all the child's wants; in fact, nearly all members of the human family have first learned to adjust themselves to the world through the assistance and under the protection of the parents. . . .

When the growing youth about the time of his adolescence finds himself a new being, face to face with a newer and wider environment, with new tasks and duties and dangers to face, it is natural that he should strive so far as possible to meet the new situation in habitual ways. The youth needs security. He wishes to feel at home in the new situations into which he has suddenly grown. He therefore strives to conceive of the world as an *imaginary family affair* and he gains the feeling of security by constructing an imaginary father who will be to this larger family what the actual father was in the family circle of his childhood experiences.

This device of gaining the feeling of security by the use of the imaginary father leads, however, to a conflict within the psyche, or, rather, it revives a conflict which has lain there for a long time. . . .

The growing child, when he conceives of the Heavenly Father pictures the father as the perfect or ideal father which he knew before he had to face the fact of the true nature of the love that existed between his parents. The Heavenly Father, therefore, is perfect in the sense that the disillusioned child conceives of perfection. But this perfection causes a conflict for the youth who in adolescence needs the father-image to give him the feeling of security. The adolescent individual finds that there are now in his own nature the very elements which in his childish egoism he refused to admit in the nature of the father. Consequently, the very use of the father-image in religion involves a conflict. "There must be *reconciliation* with the father."

This need of reconciliation is the feeling of *sin*. Sin is not what many moderns conceive it to be. It is not the same as concrete immoral behavior. Sin is thought of as "the corruption of the entire nature." It is a curse. It is a soul-destroying, world-destroying blight. The sinner does not regard himself as such because of something he has *done;* but rather because of what he *is*. The doctrine of sin is this: that human nature is so corrupt that no matter what sinful humanity may achieve, its achievement is only adding to the original offense. The individual must be *born again*. There is here a wish for the infantile return about which we have spoken in a previous lecture. The reconciliation with the father is redemption from sin. This reconciliation is achieved by the use of certain symbols. The function of these symbols is to reconcile the childhood idealism of the individual with the facts of his own mature nature. The father must be propitiated, must become forgiving. . . .

Hence, we may say that redemption from sin is, psychologically speaking, a mechanism of *defense against the feeling of inferiority*. The salvation of the soul means in psychological terms the securing of the "personality picture," a matter which I discussed in an earlier lecture. . . .

There is a peculiar fact about the religious community. Towards no other form of human association, not even the State, do men have such reverence. Men take a *filial attitude* toward their church. The church is the Holy Mother and it is very interesting that the mother-image which we saw is suppressed in religious symbolism along with the idea of the conjugal relation of the parents, reappears as the church. In entering the church, therefore, the believer symbolizes the wish for the return to the mother. In other words, we have here again a phase of the Eodipus-complex, for the church here is both Mother and Bride. And this is true of the Christian Church and the Hebrew congregation. In this way, the infantile wish becomes socialized and directed toward socially accepted goals. But the filial attitude toward the church, its very sacredness, tends to bring into operation another element. The church and the world are incompatible. The church is set over against the world; it becomes the "church militant." In other words, the religious group conceiving itself

as a peculiar people, tends to become crowd-minded and as the church gains in numerical strength through its proselyting, the will to power of its members tends to increase. It becomes coercive. And this note of coercion is almost universal.

We shall point out below (chapter vi, p. 286) how the religious experience and the processes of conversion may be aided if, indeed, it is not actually brought about, by the operation of psychological influences not strictly or directly religious, namely, music and evangelistic strategy and suggestion. The condition of hysteria and loss of self-control may be induced by the effect of music, especially when its choice and application is carefully designed to bring about a definite result. Again, the sexual element is strongly intermingled with religious sentiments and there is no doubt that unconsciously induced sexual excitement plays a very large part in the religious frenzy which is developed in evangelistic services, camp-meetings and the like. It is certain that the sense of sin, unworthiness and inadequacy is closely related to the sexual changes associated with puberty and early adolescence. Religious exercises are indeed known to provoke strong sexual responses. A prominent Catholic scholar once informed the writer that the elaborate exercises which were prescribed for him and his associates while studying for the priesthood actually produced an orgasm, even though he was utterly unconscious of any sexual content in the rites being performed.

Not only modern psychology and sociology but also modern chemistry has contributed to the clarification and secularization of religious experiences. The experience of the religious mystic of communion with God and of an ineffable presence has long been regarded as the highest form of religious experience and one of the supreme proofs of supernatural power and of the existence of God. The

philosopher, Benjamin Paul Blood, who exerted no little influence upon William James, showed that the experience of the mystic could be produced by nitrous oxide anæsthesia. Professor Horace M. Kallen repeated the experience and reports complete confirmation of Blood's contentions. Dr. Kallen says: "I tried nitrous oxide and I did experience, as Blood did, in the interval between the recovery of consciousness and complete unconsciousness, presence, moving, ineffable, and beyond words to describe." Dr. Kallen was also able to duplicate the mystical experience through recourse to the technique of the Yogic discipline of the Hindus. Other drugs than nitrous oxide are now known to produce similar reactions.

The activational or behavioristic side of religious experience falls into two categories, namely, magic and worship. A number of the older anthropologists, particularly Sir J. G. Frazer, were inclined to distinguish magic from religion and to represent magic as primitive science. No reputable anthropologist any longer entertains this view of the matter. Magic is that phase of primitive religious behavior which is devoted chiefly to the immediate realization of a certain desired end or object. Primitive man imagines that he can gain his ends by coercing the gods according to a definite ritualistic contract that the gods have supposedly revealed and to which they have agreed. If the occult formulæ are accurately complied with, then the gods, according to the theory of magic, will hand over the desired results to the group. Worship, on the other hand, is the ritualistic and ceremonial expression of man's attitude of awe, reverence, humility and gratitude with respect to the supernatural world and its dominating powers. In both early and modern religious behavior, magic and worship have usually been extensively intertwined rather than sharply differentiated, though it

is probably going too far to describe magic as the technique of primitive religion. Some writers have insisted that the chief difference between magic and worship is that magic is regarded as the bad, or socially disapproved, aspects of religious practices, while worship is the socially proper manifestations of religious life. It would scarcely seem that this distinction can be maintained. Magic, by its very nature, had to be more occult, esoteric and technical than worship, but this does not mean that it was socially tabooed. Certain pagan magical practices brought over into Christianity frequently had to be executed under cover, but this was a very special case.

The conceptual side of religion, namely, man's rationalized explanations of his emotional experiences and his religious behavior has passed from the animism of primitive society to scholastic theology, from scholastic theology to the Protestant view of "Christian Evidences" as illustrated by Paley's *Natural Theology* more than a century ago, and from Paley to the latest apologetics of the Modernist theologian. Only now, in the works of the anthropologists, the psychologists and the sociologists, are we beginning to go back of imaginative secondary rationalizations in order to secure an actual scientific knowledge of the real origins and nature of religious beliefs and practices. The revolution which takes place, once we abandon the secondary rationalizations of deductive theology and begin to study religious practices in an empirical and historical fashion, is well illustrated by the present furor in the Anglican Church which has been raised by the suggestion of the Modernist element that the sacraments be studied in the light of anthropology and psychology. What is implied here may well be seen by comparing the view of the origin and nature of the sacraments set forth in the orthodox Catholic manual, Peter Lom-

bard's *Book of Sentences*, with the anthropological facts as expounded by Percy Gardner, Edward Carpenter, Jane Harrison, Edward Hatch, F. C. Conybeare, Franz Cumont, Alfred Loisy and others who have devoted themselves to the subject.

The Christians have believed that the sacraments of the Church represent rites and forms of devotion which were revealed by Christ and are as unique as the Christian religion itself is believed to be. As every anthropologist worthy of the name knows, however, all of the Christian sacraments can be duplicated among the rites of primitive peoples. Most of them are nothing more than the Christian adoption of the universal practice of primitive peoples to provide rites designed to safeguard the special crises of life, such as birth, puberty, maturity, marriage, extreme illness, death and the like. The greatest of all the sacraments, that of the Mass, we know was established by St. Paul, so that the new Christian cult could compete more favorably with the Greek mystery religions, which had as a pivotal rite the sacred meal. The Holy Eucharist was the Christian substitute for, or analogue of, the sacred meal in the Eleusinian Mysteries. Such books as Edward Carpenter's *Origins of the Christian Religion*, Percy Gardner's *Exploratio Evangelica*, Edward Hatch's lectures on the influence of Greek thought and usages on Christianity, and the writings of Jane Harrison and Sir J. G. Frazer indicate clearly the universal and pagan background of the Christian sacraments. Such a book as Preserved Smith's *A Short History of Christian Theophagy* gives one detailed insight into the origins and nature of the central Christian sacrament of the Mass. Fundamentally, of course, the Mass is the Christian perpetuation of the primitive desire to secure continued and renewed communion with the gods and thus bring about

a new infusion of supernatural power, which in Christian terminology is the Grace of God.

III. LEADING STAGES IN THE ORIGIN OF RELIGION

The conventional notion of the origin of religion is that God or the gods have revealed to man a coherent and relatively complete body of saving knowledge. In other words, religions are the product of divine wisdom revealed and entrusted to mankind. Anthropology and cultural history have shown that nothing of the sort is the case. Religions have invariably been the product of human ignorance, and such wisdom as exists in religious beliefs and theological concepts is nothing but the sagacity of man. Rarely indeed has religion at any given time appropriated the most up-to-date and defensible forms of human knowledge and wisdom. In short, what has passed for divine wisdom is seldom, if ever, abreast of the best available human knowledge.

It is the unanimous view of reputable historians and anthropologists that religion arose because of the inability of primitive man to give a naturalistic explanation of the facts and processes of life and nature as he observed them. Primitive man was faced with a vast range of experiences but he lacked the capacity of modern man to understand and explain the things that he observed upon the basis of scientific insight and information. Primitive man was confronted by the facts of light and darkness; the flowing of water; the movement of the winds; storms; strange events such as eclipses, comets and floods; the phenomena of life, growth, disease and death; shadows, images and dreams; and strange bodily sensations, especially those associated with sex stimulation. Modern man, equipped with the resources of contemporary sci-

ence, from astronomy to psychiatry and sociology, is able at once to offer a convincing naturalistic explanation of everything observed or experienced by primitive man, but our primitive forebears were utterly incapable of thus understanding and interpreting their life experiences. They could only account for what they observed and felt upon the basis of the hypothesis of mysterious supernatural power which made the water move, dislodged rocks from their foundations and sent them crashing down the hillside, started in motion the winds which shook the forests, sent the rain that stimulated the growth of foliage and crops and might swell the rivers until they became raging torrents, gave man the power of mysterious locomotion and achievements in dream states, and brought to him stirring sensations when in the embrace of a person of the opposite sex.

The earliest stage in the development of religion, then, was that in which man accounted for the everyday facts and observations of life by assigning their origin to some vague undifferentiated and impersonal supernatural force, the nature of which he could not specifically comprehend.

This primordial type of religious life was first definitely established by Bishop Codrington through his labors among the Melanesian natives in 1891. Subsequent anthropological research has only served to confirm Codrington's initial generalizations and to prove that among primitive peoples generally there was a period of religious development prior to the appearance of the conception of individual spirits as the agents which controlled the operations of the supernatural world. This stage, in which man merely believed in a nebulous and undifferentiated, if potent, supernatural force has been called by Professor R. R. Marett the stage of *animatism*.

The next stage of religious development was that of

animism, or the period in which man came to believe in individual spirits as the ruling and controlling elements in the supernatural world. This epoch of animism was held by one of the most famous of the older school of anthropologists, Edward Burnett Tylor, to have been the earliest period of religious belief, but we have since abandoned this doctrine.

Once man had come to believe in individualized and personified spirits the subsequent development of religious conceptions was relatively simple and direct. As primitive man thoroughly accepted a comprehensive doctrine of supernatural causation, he came to hold that most good things which happened to him were the result of the benevolent aid of good spirits, while the disasters were viewed by him as due to the malicious activity of evil spirits. In this way the division of the spirit world into good and evil spirits logically followed the origin of the very notion of individual spirits. Primitive man, being accustomed to observing human social situations controlled by a hierarchy of leaders and also being familiar with rudimentary social ranks and grades, naturally projected this earthly hierarchy into his interpretation of the spirit world. He thus came to conceive of a hierarchy of good and evil spirits, each presided over by a supreme good spirit and a dominant evil spirit respectively. In this manner there arose among early historical peoples the conception of God and the Devil, each aided by a host of subordinates. Religious thought has rarely if ever gone beyond this conception of the hierarchy of the spirits. No great historical religious system known to the writer has ever evolved into a pure monotheism, namely, the conception of a god isolated and omnipotent and wholly divorced from the aid of a subordinate hierarchy.

The elaborate mythology of early religions is easy to understand. Primitive man was not hampered by considerations of exact scientific knowledge or formal logic. On the basis of certain premises, which were in no sense checked by scientific knowledge, he was free to ramble on from one absurdity to another in his abstract thought, even though in regard to his everyday life and its problems he may not have been anything like as pre-logical as Lévy-Bruhl and others have assumed. Since primitive days mankind has been endeavoring to rationalize these reactions of early man to the external world and his own experiences and to adapt these primitive interpretations to the culture and outlook of later ages. Even today Modernist theologians devote much of their time to the effort to adjust the misconceptions of antique ignorance to modern concepts and experiences, instead of taking stock of nature and man in the light of modern knowledge and attempting to reconstruct religion in this new perspective.

The process of making gods is so important for an understanding of religion that it is worth while for us to examine this process somewhat more in detail. The traditional view is that man was made by God in God's image. The historical fact is that God was made by man in terms of man's psychological imagery. As with religion in general so with gods in particular, the latter were a product of the ignorance of early man and of the projection of his imperfectly comprehended earthly experiences into an interpretation of the heavens and heavenly powers. We have already indicated the origins of man's belief in supernatural power and the process whereby it was later held that this supernatural power was lodged in individual spirits. The early gods were nothing more than sublimated

and glorified spirits. Dr. Dietrich has well summarized this process of the evolution of gods out of the earlier animistic beliefs:[4]

> This recognition of the importance of some spirits over others, in connection with the gradual understanding of certain natural processes, led men to departmentalize and organize their deities, instead of ascribing a spirit to each and every object. Things are grouped together, and one god is thought to preside over a whole group. For example, they no longer think of a spirit in each tree, but of a spirit presiding over all the trees—the god of the forest; there is no longer a spirit in each stream but a god of streams; no longer a god of each sea, but a god of the seas. This stage of thought is best exemplified in the religion of the Greeks and the Romans. By this time, man had developed a highly organized family and social life and this was carried over into the realm of the gods; so that the gods were related, and special functions and responsibilities assigned to each, and the importance of the god or goddess determined by the importance of the function. Man had also by now attained a much higher degree of culture and there came to be gods of the thought and emotional world, such as the goddess of wisdom and the goddess of love. Thus arose twelve major deities and the countless minor divinities of the pagan world, forming a well-organized pantheon of gods and goddesses.

Man has had a tendency to develop gods to preside over all the processes and experiences of real importance to the individual and to each social group. It is difficult to describe in any summary fashion the origin and nature of early gods, because the nature and number of the gods developed by any group were dependent upon the emotional significance of the experiences of the members of this group. Some experiences were common to the race and, therefore, there are certain underlying uniformities in the evolution of gods among all early peoples. But

[4] J. H. Dietrich, *How the Gods Were Made.*

along with these uniform experiences have gone many differences of environment and occupation, which account for wide variations in the function and number of gods to be observed among the diverse peoples of the earth. All we can say in the way of a sweeping generalization is that wherever in primitive society we have an emotional experience or situation of any considerable potency, there we have the raw material out of which a god might be, and usually was, constructed.

We may first consider those gods which arise out of experiences more or less universal with the entire race. The impulse to reproduction has been common to all men and has brought about a tendency toward permanent pairing in the initiation and control of the reproductive process. The sex urge in reproduction was responsible for the emergence of a large number of deities. Gods of sex with their various phallic symbols appeared. The gods of the household arose and were assigned precise and varied functions. Ancestor worship developed and the position of the father came to take on high religious significance. But reproduction is something which extends far beyond the perpetuation and increase of the human race. It involves all nature. Therefore early man created gods of life, death, rebirth and fertility. Observing that in human reproduction the female seemed to be all-important, early man very frequently tended to associate fertility and reproduction in general with female deities or goddesses.

Then there are certain crises in life which man everywhere has to face, whatever his race or geographical habitat. Birth, puberty, maturity, marriage, sickness and death are representative examples of such crises. Gods are developed to preside over such special situations and to enable man to pass them with the highest degree of safety. Further, there are the experiences related to the physical

universe which are common to all men, such as the passage from day to night and from night back to daylight. Man has evolved gods of the light and darkness. Seasonal changes were likewise invested with divine supervisors. Strong drink and strong drugs produced strange and potent emotional reactions among primitive and early historic peoples. Consequently, we are not surprised to find that the people of India have made a God out of Soma, a powerful liquor made from leaves of a mountain plant bearing that name. It has, as Professor Kallen remarks, "a godlike kick." All are familiar with the comparable Greek deification of Dionysius and Bacchus.

In these ways the major experiences common to all humanity brought about the appearance of a vast number of gods to preside over every situation of any emotional significance to members of the human race. But, in spite of the similarity of experiences and the unity of the race, there has been no absolute uniformity in the emergence, classification and description of these gods. Differences in cultural surroundings have produced diversity of detail even in those experiences most basic and uniform among mankind. Professor H. M. Kallen has well expressed the ways in which these common experiences of the race have aided in producing our gods: [5]

> The standpoint from which these aspects of the visible world is regarded is, as we have already many times noted, that of the phases in the life cycle of the race itself—birth and puberty and parenthood and death; childhood and maidenhood and youth and maternity; the toil and tasks of the farmer on the land, the craftsman and merchant in the town, the sailor on the sea; the woman in the field; the rule of the family, of the state. The changing relations between these units, their constant needs and varying desires, become the social ground-plans of the pantheons of the world. In the making of the gods they supply the first material.

[5] Kallen, *Why Religion?*, pp. 137-138.

The second is the underworld of shadow, reflection, dream-figure and breath; the clouds of anonymous dead, depersonalized because disembodied, men and animals of the underworld, shades waiting their turns to re-emerge upon the surface of the earth and resume the articulate relationships of the earthly life that Sheol and Hades and Pandora's Box know not of. They are the impatient, dangerous seed of new life. As the corn and vine come up out of the earth so they out of the body of the mother. You see the vegetation cycle—corn and grape and olive, dropping to the ground in the ripe autumn; lying inert and barren beneath the ground through the cold, dead winter; rising uncertainly up into the free air again in the green spring, forming, ripening—to remembered shapes and savors and satisfactions in the hot summer. Later you facilitate and direct this sequence by your husbandry—this ever-returning round of the same precious things from air to earth to air again.

In addition to these gods which emerged out of experiences and problems common to all mankind, we have the gods which were the product of special circumstances of environment, occupation and the like. The geographic influences of a special sort have given us our gods of the mountains, of the plains, of the desert and the sea. Occupations and industries have had their definite effect upon the production of gods. Hunters, pastoral peoples and agriculturalists have produced gods appropriate to the special experiences and problems facing those engaged in each of these efforts to maintain a livelihood. Gods were created not only to preside over each of these general industries, but also to care for the special needs of each occupation. Both pastoral peoples and farmers need rain. Pastoral peoples are especially dependent upon animal fertility and reproduction. The farmer stands in the position of peculiar dependency with relation to the weather, as does the fisherman to the sea. Gods are provided to look after each of the special needs of those engaged in

these various occupations. The animal neighbors of early men likewise had a definite relationship to the emergence of gods. There is a tendency to deify the animals upon which a group depends in a very special manner or which the group particularly fears for good and sufficient reasons. Further, animals may be deified because they symbolize power, strength, wisdom and other attributes esteemed by man.

The multiplicity of gods in primitive and early historic society is something which it is difficult for us to understand today. This fact may be illustrated by indicating the gods of the Roman household alone in early Roman society. First there was *Vesta*, the god of the fire and the center of family worship. Next came the *Di Penates*, or gods of the *penus*, the family storeroom. These were the guardian spirits of the family supplies. Then there was the Genius of the *paterfamilias*, the procreative power which continued the existence of the family—a sort of supernatural symbol of the germ-plasm. There was a god of the door or threshold, called *Janus* in the earliest period. Finally, there was included the *Lar familiaris* or the god of the boundaries of the family domain. Added to these, of course, were the public gods of the Roman state religion.

If man creates gods he likewise is prone to deify man. The most common form is that known as ancestor worship, in which the heroes of the past tend to take on divine attributes. As the state evolves, the head of this supreme political organization in society comes to be deified. Therefore the gap or gulf between god and man is not a sharp one, men continually emerging into the estate of gods. The deification of great political and military heroes and distinguished ancestors is common enough. We may illustrate this process of deification by a less frequent

type of apotheosis. In his *Healing Gods of Ancient Civilization,* Dr. Walter Addison Jayne indicates the stages in the process of deifying Aesculapius, the classical god of medicine and healing:

(1) the mortal Thessalian physician who learned the healing art from Cheiron and taught to his sons, who applied it with distinction in the Trojan War; (2) heroized after his death, his spirit, conceived as an earth-daimon—a cave spirit with the serpent as its emblem—continued his activities, sending forth from the depth cures for diseases and prophecies, and celebrated by Homer and other poets; (3) he became the son of Apollo and the great Epidaurian god of healing; he was deified by a thunderbolt of Zeus, and assumed a uranic as well as a chthonic aspect, with a cult that was recognized as dominant throughout Greece; (4) the demi-god and hero of Athenian tradition, honored by great festivals; (5) and finally, Æsculapius, the god of healing of later Roman tradition, represented by the serpent, who faded from view in a new era.

Not only does man create the gods and assign them their functions; he even confers upon the gods their moral attributes. The moral traits of the gods are invariably a reflection of the morals of the group. In this matter, as in regard to the origin of religion and of gods, the historical facts are exactly the reverse of traditional beliefs. The conventional notion is that the gods have given man his moral beliefs, ideals and practices, whereas, as an actual matter of fact, man has projected his own moral codes upon the gods. Dr. Dietrich has admirably summarized this process:[6]

For instance, as we look back over this long procession of gods in which the people have believed from time to time we realize that in character they are merely man's magnified projection of himself, and have reflected at each period of

[6] Dietrich, *How the Gods Were Made.*

the world's history the culture and morality which man had at that time attained. When the predominating characteristics of man were jealousy and cruelty, the gods were jealous and cruel; and only as man sloughed these off and developed within himself a sense of justice and righteousness, did the gods become just and righteous; so that at any period of man's development the gods or God simply represent an idealized and glorified type of man's own character, a projection of his moral ideals, moulded into a definite form as an object of worship; and therefore have only a subjective existence in the mind of man.

This moral evolution of gods is admirably illustrated by the case of the Old Testament God Yahweh. As Professor Kallen has pointed out, Yahweh first appears as a phallic focus of supernatural power symbolized and commemorated by upright stones. He then developed into a cruel and ruthless tribal divinity of desert nomads, aiding his followers in the destruction of their enemies who worshiped gods other than Yahweh. Finally, Yahweh became a universal Providence directing the affairs of nature and the course of history.

In the early days the gods were the product of man's unrestrained and illiterate imagination, but as culture developed and the art of writing was mastered the process of making and describing gods became a matter of literary imagery as well. These written descriptions of the gods tended, however, to give their nature and attributes greater precision and to limit the earlier freedom of interpretation and alteration. Professor Kallen has thus described how the literary artistry of the Hebrew prophets both elaborated the dignity and power of Yahweh and at the same time gave his qualities greater precision and permanence: [7]

[7] Kallen, *Why Religion?*, p. 146.

Consider Jahweh. Cruel god of a horde of nomadic invaders settling in a land of farmers, he had his images, ranging in elaboration from an uncut *mazzebah* or *asherah,* to a golden bull. He was plural by place and tribe and function. What did the prophetic movement do with his sacred powers? It identified his *taboos* with a written constitution. It made his worship blasphemous anywhere but in the temple in Jerusalem. It challenged, though it could not overthrow, his imaging in figures of metal and stone as pillar, as bull, as serpent. It did so not merely in speaking but in writing. Prophetic writings became sacred things. They established in enduring form the prescriptions and rites of Jahweh. They gave his political unity an advantage over the natural pluralism of tribe and locality. They assimilated to his original powers the powers of the Canaanite *baalim* of fertility. They rendered him omnicompetent. They stopped him from continuing to figure as a phallus, a serpent, a bull, and prevented him from becoming a man. He retained thus the primary indefiniteness, the impersonality of the supernatural and acquired the purposiveness of a human passion. Without the arresting force of the sacred word, this could not have happened. The word set a limit to the natural changes Jahweh could undergo, while the lack of other than verbal imagery kept his being flexible and adjustive.

Our modern scientific and historical knowledge of the processes of creating gods enables us to understand the facts concerning the actual development of Yahweh, or the God of the Old Testament. The orthodox view is, of course, that he revealed himself to the Jews and that the Jews owe their remarkable place in history to the solicitude of Yahweh for them until they refused to recognize the divinity of Jesus. The obvious historical fact is that Yahweh was gradually evolved in the religious consciousness of the Jews, passing through the various stages which we have described above. Yahweh and his cult owe their striking vogue and prestige in human history to the fact

that they were lucky enough to be picked up and elaborated by so amazingly capable and dramatic a people as the Jews. There were plenty of petty tribal deities in the ancient east similar in many points to Yahweh, but all trace of them has evaporated. In short, Yahweh did not make the Jews what they have become, but rather the Jews, for better or worse, gave Yahweh his well-known place in human history.

While the development of a belief in the hierarchy of good and evil spirits and in a multiplicity of gods and devils was common to primitive society and early historic peoples everywhere, the ancient Persians were apparently the first to carry this conception out of the realm of the concrete and to elaborate it into an abstract cosmic philosophy. The Persians held that God had created the world for the purpose of providing a specific and concrete arena in which the two great opposing principles of good and evil could carry on the impressive and decisive struggle which would end in a glorious victory for good and a crushing defeat for the principle of evil. The principle of good was symbolized by light and was led and directed by the Persian god, Ormuzd, who was aided by the Persian savior, Mithras. The principle of evil was symbolized by darkness and promulgated by the Persian devil, Ahriman, who was aided by his supreme councillors of Hell and by a vast number of lesser diabolical assistants. Those inhabitants of this earth who were wise enough to lend assistance to the principle of good would be rewarded by an eternal life full of happiness, while those who foolishly and wickedly supported Ahriman and the principle of evil would find ultimate destruction in the lake of fire and brimstone. Once good had decisively triumphed over evil and Ahriman and his devilish host were defeated and destroyed, the physical universe would pass

away, having fulfilled the function for which it was created. This Persian explanation of the riddle of the universe was adopted by the later Jews and Christians and has been the only answer to this perplexing central problem of cosmic and social philosophy which has ever gained any general acceptance in western civilization.

The Persian view of the serious and decisive nature of the future life had a tremendous influence upon the development of western religion. With the early Jews and with the early Greeks and Romans the existence of man after death was not a matter of great importance. The Jews believed that the dead gathered in *Sheol* while the pagans believed that the future abode of mankind was *Hades*. Both of these places partook of the nature of a grey, drab, indifferent existence offering no special reward for virtue and no peculiarly hideous punishments for wickedness. With the Persians, however, it was a matter of tremendous concern as to whether a person was to be numbered among the good or the wicked when the determination of his future estate was at stake. If he was accounted good he would be taken to the sun to dwell in blissful immortality in the presence of Ormuzd. If, however, he was classified as wicked he would be summarily destroyed in hideous fashion. Later the Persians, as well as the Jews and Christians who adopted the final Persian views of heaven and hell, concluded that summary destruction by however terrible a process was not sufficient punishment for the wicked. Therefore, they developed the doctrine that the wicked would have an eternal life like the good who had been saved but it would be of an altogether different character. The wicked would be punished by incredible tortures throughout an immortal existence. The Jews, as well as the Christians, took over this Persian dualism and eschatology. The Persian view of the devil

and hell is entirely absent from the earlier strains in the Hebrew scriptures, but in a late Hebrew book like *Enoch* we find diabolism and hell lore as prevalent as it is in any version of the Persian theology. In his remarkable work, *A Friend of Jesus*, Ernest Sutherland Bates has admirably summarized the nature of the adoption of this Persian cosmic philosophy by the Jews. The ironic tone of this summary gives it greater force and interest than many of the more solemn historical accounts which we might have substituted for Mr. Bates' description:[8]

Now it befell in due time that the headship of the earth passed from Babylon to Persia. And the remnants of the Jews lived at peace under the Persians.

And when Jehovah beheld that they were at peace, he crept back among them.

But the Jews learned many things of the Persians not to their own advantage.

For the Persians held that there be two gods, a god of light and a god of darkness, and that the god of light sendeth good upon men and the god of darkness sendeth evil.

Now when the Jews questioned Jehovah of this, Jehovah was at first wroth, and he answered, vehemently: Is there a god beside me? yea, there is no god; I know not any.

I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no god. I am the Lord, and there is none else, there is no god beside me.

I form the light and create darkness: I make peace and create evil: I, the Lord, do all these things.

Howbeit, when Jehovah had reflected within himself, he perceived the merit in an evil god upon whom to place the blame for all that miscarries in the world, and Jehovah made haste to add,

True, there is none other god but me, yet is there also a devil, who goeth about through the world, seeking whom he may devour; and I alone can save you from the devil. Therefore worship ye me the more!

[8] Bates, *op. cit.*, pp. 77 ff.

Now the Persians also taught that the god of light hath armies of angels to fight on his behalf, so the Jews questioned Jehovah of this also.

And Jehovah thought, Shall a miserable Persian god have armies of angels, and shall not I have angels? And he answered, Assuredly I have angels, yea, and archangels, cherubim and seraphim, thrones, dominations, principalities, and powers, all these have I beside me, under my command. Therefore worship ye me the more!

And the Persians also taught the doctrine of a future life, of a heaven wherein men be rewarded for their deeds on this earth, and of a hell wherein they be punished. And the Jews questioned Jehovah of this, also.

And Jehovah said unto himself, Verily, the god of the Persians is a clever god; why had not I thought of this, myself, even I?

And Jehovah answered and said, Yea, there is a heaven of everlasting glory, wherein are Noah and Abraham, Moses, Rahab the harlot, Jael and David, and all them that have served me.

And there is also a hell of everlasting torment, wherein are Adam and Cain, Delilah, Saul, and all them that have hated me, even all the Canaanites, Moabites, Ammonites, Philistines and Egyptians, Assyrians and Babylonians, and many others, so that there be ten that suffer the agonies of hell to one that enjoyeth the rapture of heaven. Therefore worship ye me the more.

Thus was the last case of the Jews worse than the first, owing to that which they, and Jehovah, learned from the Persians.

For now at last, with the devil as his scapegoat, angels to protect him, and the gifts of eternal pleasure or pain in his hands, Jehovah lorded it over the Jews according to his heart's desire.

The Christians took over the Persian view of the purpose of this life and of the nature of the life to come, in part indirectly through the medium of the later Jewish versions of the Persian lore and in part directly through

contact with Persian cults such as Mithraism. Otherworldliness became the characteristic mark of orthodox Christianity, and long before the time of Augustine it became the all-absorbing ambition of the faithful Christian to attain heaven and escape hell. Historic Christianity represented a synthesis of most of the great world religions of the Mediterranean area, to which composite product was added Hellenic metaphysics. The leading elements in this Christian synthesis were the Babylonian cosmology, the Jewish historical background, the Persian interest in the life to come and the metaphysics and rhetoric of Hellas.

IV. THE CHRISTIAN EPIC

In his interesting work *The Life of Reason: Reason in Religion*, the eminent philosopher George Santayana has given us a splendid picture of the composite Christian doctrine which had emerged by the time of Augustine and Jerome. His summary of the Christian Epic which we quote below admirably summarizes the essentials of orthodox Christianity whether of the brand of Cardinal Hayes or of John Roach Straton:

> There was in the beginning, so runs the Christian story, a great Celestial King, wise and good, surrounded by a court of winged musicians and messengers. He had existed from all eternity, but had always intended, when the right moment should come, to create temporal beings, imperfect copies of himself in various degrees. These, of which man was the chief, began their career in the year 4004 B.C., and they would live on an indefinite time, possibly, that chronological symmetry might not be violated, until A.D. 4004. The opening and close of this drama were marked by two magnificent tableaux. In the first, in obedience to the word of God, sun, moon, and stars, and earth with all her planets and animals, assumed their appropriate places, and nature sprang into be-

ing with all her laws. The first man was made out of clay, by a special act of God, and the first woman was fashioned from one of his ribs, extracted while he lay in a deep sleep. They were placed in an orchard where they often could see God, its owner, walk in the cool of the evening. He suffered them to range at will and eat of all the fruits he had planted save that of one tree only. But they, incited by a devil, transgressed this single prohibition, and were banished from the paradise with a curse upon their head, the man to live by the sweat of his brow and the woman to bear children in labor. These children possessed from the moment of conception the inordinate natures which their parents had acquired. They were born to sin and to find disorder and death everywhere within and without them.

At the same time God, lest the work of his hands should wholly perish, promised to redeem in his good season some of Adam's children and restore them to a natural life. This redemption was to come ultimately through a descendant of Eve, whose foot should bruise the head of the serpent. But it was to be prefigured by many partial and special redemptions. Thus, Noah was to be saved from the deluge, Lot from Sodom, Isaac from the sacrifice, Moses from Egypt, the captive Jews from Babylon, and all faithful souls from heathen forgetfulness and idolatry. For a certain tribe had been set apart from the beginning to keep alive the memory of God's judgments and promises, while the rest of mankind, abandoned to its natural depravity, sank deeper and deeper into crimes and vanities. The deluge that came to punish these evils did not avail to cure them. "The world was renewed and the earth rose again above the bosom of the waters, but in this renovation there remained eternally some trace of divine vengeance. Until the deluge all nature had been exceedingly hardy and vigorous, but by that vast flood of water which God had spread out over the earth, and by its long abiding there, all saps were diluted; the air, charged with too dense and heavy a moisture, bred ranker principles of corruption. The early constitution of the universe was weakened, and human life, from stretching as it has formerly done to near a thousand years, grew gradually briefer. Herbs and roots lost their primitive potency and stronger food had to

be furnished to man by the flesh of other animals. . . Death gained upon life and men felt themselves overtaken by a speedier chastisement. As day by day they sank deeper in their wickedness, it was but right they should daily, as it were, stick faster in their woe. The very change in nourishment made manifest their decline and degradation, since as they became feebler they became also more voracious and blood-thirsty."

Henceforth there were two spirits, two parties, or, as Saint Augustine called them, two cities in the world. The City of Satan, whatever its artifices in art, war, or philosophy, was essentially corrupt and impious. Its joy was but a comic mask and its beauty the whitening of a sepulchre. It stood condemned before God and before man's better conscience by its vanity, cruelty, and secret misery, by its ignorance of all that it truly behoved a man to know who was destined to immortality. Lost, as it seemed, within this Babylon, or visible only in its obscure and forgotten purlieus, lived on at the same time the City of God, the society of all the souls God predestined to salvation; a city which, however humble and inconspicuous it might seem on earth, counted its myriad transfigured citizens in heaven, and had its destinies, like its foundations, in eternity. To this City of God, belonged, in the first place, the patriarchs and the prophets who, throughout their plaintive and ardent lives, were faithful to what echoes still remained of a primeval revelation, and waited patiently for the greater revelation to come. To the same city belonged the magi who followed a star till it halted over the stable in Bethlehem; Simeon, who divined the present salvation of Israel; John the Baptist, who bore witness to the same and made straight its path; and Peter, to whom not flesh and blood, but the spirit of the Father in Heaven, revealed the Lord's divinity. For salvation had indeed come with the fullness of time, not, as the carnal Jews had imagined it, in the form of an earthly restoration, but through the incarnation of the Son of God in the Virgin Mary, his death upon a cross, his descent into hell, and his resurrection at the third day according to the Scriptures. To the same city belonged finally all those who, believing in the reality and efficacy of Christ's

mission, relied on his merits and followed his commandment of unearthly love.

All history was henceforth essentially nothing but the conflict between these two cities; two moralities, one natural, the other supernatural; two philosophies, one rational, the other revealed; two beauties, one corporeal, the other spiritual; two glories, one temporal, the other eternal; two institutions, one the world, the other the Church. These, whatever their momentary alliances or compromises, were radically opposed and fundamentally alien to one another. Their conflict was to fill the ages until, when wheat and tares had long flourished together and exhausted between them the earth for whose substance they struggled, the harvest should come; the terrible day of reckoning when those who had believed the things of religion to be imaginary would behold with dismay the Lord visibly coming down through the clouds of heaven, the angels blowing their alarming trumpets, all generations of the dead rising from their graves, and judgment without appeal passed on every man, to the edification of the universal company and his own unspeakable joy or confusion. Whereupon the blessed would enter eternal bliss with God their master and the wicked everlasting torments with the devil whom they served.

The drama of history was thus to close upon a second tableau; long-robed and beautiful cohorts passing above, amid various psalmodies, into an infinite luminous space, while below the damned, howling, writhing, and half transformed into loathsome beasts, should be engulfed in a fiery furnace. The two cities, always opposite in essence, should thus be finally divided in existence, each bearing its natural fruits and manifesting its true nature.

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Chapter IV

GOD'S WORD

God being the author of the Bible, common sense certainly assures us that *every* matter it contains, as originally written, is certainly as infallible as its author—whether on matters concerning science or any other.

(W. A. Jarrell)

I. THE BIBLE THE FOUNDATION OF WESTERN RELIGIONS

The Bible occupies a crucial position in the Jewish and Christian religion. The degree to which it dominates religious thought and practice, however, differs somewhat as among the Jews and Christian groups. The Jews and Catholics have many other sources of religious guidance and inspiration in addition to the text of the Bible. In the Talmud and other collections of non-biblical legal and theological writings are to be found a large volume of supplementary material which enters actively and deeply into the Jewish religion. Similarly, the theology and ritual prepared for the Catholics by the early church fathers and theologians occupy a prominent place in Catholic devotion. With the Protestant sects, however, the Bible almost completely monopolizes the task and responsibility of spiritual guidance. Yet in broad outline the significance of the Bible is much the same for Jew, Catholic and Protestant. The non-biblical Jewish religious writings are devoted primarily to commentaries upon the text of the Bible and to the further development of biblical doctrine. The Catholic theology and ritual are chiefly concerned

with interpreting and applying the religious system outlined in holy scriptures. Without the biblical text there would be no basis or justification for the Jewish or Christian religions. Hence the importance of examining candidly the origin and nature of this remarkable book.

Catholics sometimes contend that only the Protestants regard the Bible as the literal and inspired word of God. They maintain that the Catholic Church has adopted a much broader, more tolerant and more scholarly view of the situation. Any such contention is without foundation in fact. While it is true that the Catholic Church makes much less direct use of the Bible than the Protestants, nevertheless the Catholic view of the divine authorship and inerrant nature of the Bible coincides precisely with the position taken by the most dogmatic Protestant Fundamentalists. The official Catholic attitude towards the Bible is competently stated in the following passage from Dr. E. Boyd Barrett's *While Peter Sleeps.*[1]

"The Bible in its entirety," writes a great Catholic authority, [L. Cl. Fillion, S.S., Consultor of the Pontifical Biblical Commission] "is the personal work of God. In it He records His marvelous revelations in history throughout the course of centuries, from the creation of the world to the establishment of the Christian Church . . . the Bible is inspired by God in its entirety and in its least details. . . . With all our strength let us stand up for the dogma of its inspiration together with all the conclusions and consequences that must necessarily follow."

The "dogma" referred to is the decree of the Vatican Council to the effect that the entire Bible with all its books and all its parts has God for its author. "It would be absolutely false," declared Leo XIII (*"Providentissimus Deus,"* 1893), "either to limit inspiration to some parts of the Scriptures or to admit that the sacred writer himself erred. Neither can we tolerate the methods of those who do not hesitate to admit that divine

[1] Barrett, *op. cit.*, pp. 218-19.

inspiration extends only to those truths which concern faith and morals and to nothing else . . . all the books and those in their entirety, which the Church has accepted as sacred and canonical in all their parts were written under the dictation of the Holy Spirit. No error can be attached to divine inspiration, for of itself that excludes all error . . . God the sovereign truth cannot be the author of error. . . . The doctors of the Church are unanimous in declaring that these books in whole and in part, are all alike divinely inspired, that God Himself has spoken by the sacred authors and that He cannot utter what is contrary to the truth."

A Catholic therefore must accept as of faith that the Bible is written by God, He being the "principal author," and the prophets and Moses being merely "instrumental" authors; and that it is true and holy in all its parts and in every one of its details; and that it is the sure foundation of his faith and his religion. It is a "holy book" through and through; the book of eternal life.

The Bible is, of course, primarily significant as providing the outlines of the religious philosophy of the Jews and Christians. It tells us of the creation of man; the subsequent fall of man and the launching of the divine curse upon the human race; the origins and selection of the Jews, the chosen people of God; the definitive revelation of divine truth to mankind through the inspired scribes, prophets and priests; the cosmic dualism and eschatology which the Jews derived from the Persians; the gradual development of the Messianic hope, especially after the Greek and Syrian conquests; and the coming of Jesus as the vicarious sacrifice of the only begotten Son of God, so that the human race might be rescued from the curse of sin, believe and be saved. The Bible, of course, contains many details elaborating upon the above subjects, but the core of its religious contribution is the theme of creation, the fall, and the subsequent potential redemption of the race through the atoning sacrifice of Jesus. The Jews, of

course, reject the traditional Christian conception of the mission and divinity of Jesus and accept only the religious picture provided in the Old Testament.

In addition to serving as the foundation of the religious scheme of things which has dominated western society, the Bible has inculcated many other views, particularly in the realm of history and natural science, which have profoundly influenced western civilization. In its historic sections the Bible gives us the long accepted version of the origins of the human race and human culture; an account of the rise of moral codes; an interpretation of the origins of the several human races; the history of the Hebrew people; much incidental information in regard to the history of the ancient Orient; and the authoritative chronology of the history of mankind from Adam to Christ. At one time the Bible was unquestionably the most important historical work extant, and biblical characters occupied a position of importance far transcending that of the outstanding figures of secular history. As Professor Robinson once remarked: "The Amorites were invested with an importance denied the Carthaginians. Enoch and Lot loomed large in a past which scarcely knew of a Pericles." Unquestionably, even the great majority of Americans still obtain most of their knowledge in regard to the history of antiquity from the Bible.

Likewise the Bible has probably exerted a greater influence upon the human race than any work of natural science ever published. The Bible gave to western civilization the accepted view of cosmology; the essentials of astronomy, including many rare occurrences such as Joshua's stopping of the sun; the orthodox version of geology and biology; the view of psychology which was accepted down to the close of the nineteenth century and is still taught in many denominational colleges in the

United States today; the Christian version of anthropology, including the origins of man and the development of culture; much medical knowledge; and something of physics and chemistry. So potent have been the biblical conceptions of cosmology, biology, psychology and anthropology that they still hold their ground with the majority of mankind in our western civilization. Despite the progress of science in all of these fields, which so thoroughly discredits the whole biblical interpretation in these realms of knowledge, the sacred version still prevails outside the circle of the learned minority. We may thus say that the Bible is for western civilization, not only the most important guide to matters religious but also the most influential historical treatise and scientific manual thus far produced in the history of mankind.

In spite of this predominant influence which the Bible has exercised in the religious, historical and scientific instruction of mankind, there is singularly little in the Bible which would recommend itself to man as pleasing or reasonable if the doctrines and descriptions were found in any other work. We have accepted the religious, historical and scientific content of the Bible almost exclusively because of the erroneous conventional ideas of its origins and nature. If the average reader were to pick up the Bible without any advance knowledge or presuppositions, he would be likely to regard it as an amazingly dull and tedious book in many parts, extremely preposterous in others, contradictory in description, ridiculous and degrading in its basic philosophy and interspersed with passages eulogizing cruelty and brutality or dispensing obscenity.

Nothing could well produce a greater intellectual revolution in western civilization than a candid inculcation of the actual facts relative to the nature and composition

of Holy Writ. If a book like Joseph Wheless' *Is It God's Word?* could be read attentively and with an open mind by every literate American, Judaism and Christianity would be dealt a blow in a generation from which they could never recover. The only hope for the survival of either orthodoxy or Devout Modernism lies in their capacity to keep from the people a knowledge of the actual nature of the Bible. Likewise, the most strategic move for true Modernism would be to concentrate upon an exposition of the real character of the Bible. This task should be executed with neither malice nor reverence. The attitudes of Mr. Wheless and Dr. Fosdick are perhaps equally divergent from the most desirable manner of approaching the description of the holy book of the Jews and Christians. What we need to do is to come to the problem with complete candor and objectivity, exactly as we would face any issue of secular scholarship and human enlightenment.

II. THE ORTHODOX VIEW OF THE HOLY BIBLE

We may now proceed to summarize the attitude towards the Bible which is held by orthodox Jews and Christians alike. In the first place, the Bible is regarded as a unique and sacred book. The word Bible is usually explained as meaning "The Book." The late Mr. Bryan used to regard it as a sufficient defense of the Bible to state that no other Bible had ever been published. The orthodox are rarely aware that the other great world religions in turn boast their own holy books. If they do realize that such is the case they look upon the holy writings of other religious groups as base and inferior forgeries and pretensions.

The orthodox share the belief that the Bible was dic-

tated directly by God to faithful scribes, beginning with Moses. The majority of the orthodox imagine that God used the vernacular of some modern language group when dictating Holy Writ to his faithful human secretaries. The legislator who introduced in the Tennessee Legislature the bill under the terms of which Mr. Scopes was prosecuted in the summer of 1925 expressed the belief under cross-examination by Mr. Darrow that the Bible had been dictated by God in the classic English of the King James version. The pious German peasant takes it for granted that God spoke to Moses in the German language of Luther's translation. A somewhat more sophisticated order of believers imagine that God spoke in the Hebrew language and assume that there was a specific Hebrew language distinct from the other Semitic tongues of the near Orient. A Catholic is likely to believe that God revealed himself in Latin.

The faithful Christian takes it for granted that the books of the Bible were dictated by God in chronological order, the first chapter of Genesis being the oldest portion of the Old Testament and the last chapter of Malachi the latest book in the Old Testament to be dictated by Yahweh. Likewise in regard to the New Testament, Matthew is supposed to be the first book written down and the revelations of St. John the last to be dictated. The faithful also have a very definite notion about the specific scribes used by Yahweh in the compilation of the Bible. The Pentateuch is believed, for example, to have been written by Moses, the Psalms by David, Proverbs by Solomon, and the Gospel of John by the apostle John. With the exception of the delay in beginning the divine dictation of the Pentateuch to Moses, it is generally believed that God dictated the books of the Bible at approximately the same date as the events described in each

book. The book of Daniel, for example, is assumed to have been written at the height of the prosperity of the second Babylonian kingdom at the opening of the sixth century B.C. Every verse in Holy Writ is deemed all important and highly essential. The most trivial information about the least important character is held to have vital significance for the human race. Otherwise God would not have taken the trouble to dictate it. As Professor Robinson has well expressed it, the faithful Jews and Christians believe of the Bible that: "Everything is true, essential, significant, equipollent, harmonious, interchangeable, and susceptible of infinite combinations, regardless of context and of historical and literary considerations." Likewise, the entire Bible is believed to be highly proper reading for the faithful, who can in no way be harmed by any passage, however crude, brutal or obscene.

It is obvious to the devout Jews and Christians that in approaching the Bible human standards, namely those which we would utilize in analyzing any secular literary product, are not to be employed. What seem to mortal man impossible or preposterous statements and striking literal contradictions are to be explained on the hypothesis of miracles or allegory. Contradictions are not real contradictions when the material is truly understood. What appear to be preposterous statements are either the evidence of God's wonder-working or are passages which were consciously inserted by God to furnish proof of divine authorship. Indeed, it is not fruitful to raise any question in regard to seemingly incredible or contradictory statements in the Bible. It is sufficient and complete proof of their authenticity that they appear in Holy Writ. The attitude of the faithful believer is that of the late Mr. Bryan, who informed Mr. Darrow that he would

have been ready to believe that Jonah swallowed the whale, provided a statement to this effect existed in the Bible. In case the description and dating of a historic occurrence mentioned in the Bible does not square with the information produced by the best secular history in regard to the same matter, this only means that secular history is fallible and unreliable upon this point. Finally, the orthodox reader supports the view that all parts of the Bible are of essentially equal value and validity and readily interchangeable. Verses from the Bible may also be quoted out of context without doing violence to the intent of God, and materials that were set down in the ninth century before Christ may be legitimately interpreted for the explanation and guidance of contemporary social conditions.

The faithful Christian assumes that we have the original text of the Bible as it was taken down by the various scribes from the dictation of the Almighty. The translations which have been made are believed to be based directly upon this original text, and the translations are supposed to have been performed as much under divine auspices as the original dictation of the text. This means that all translations of the original text, in whatever language, are identical in meaning and import. There can be no question of authenticity in any of the modern versions of the Bible and no variation in the content of the translations. It is believed that the books in the Bible exist today in the exact form in which God originally handed them down. Nothing has been added to or taken away from the original text nor has there been any change in the order and arrangement of the original divine revelation. The ancient Hebrews were extremely careful not to alter or to lose anything in their holy writings and would

never have contemplated such a thing as any editing or rearranging of the text as originally dictated.

In other words, the orthodox person believes that the Hebrews were fully conscious throughout their history that their writings had been directly revealed by God and they maintained an attitude toward their sacred writings entirely compatible with this hypothesis. It is universally held by the faithful that there was no chance for human prejudice or mundane considerations to enter into the compilation or arrangement of the text of the Bible. The devout Christian believes that there is no doubt whatever as to just what books were dictated by God and he takes it for granted that every one is in complete agreement as to the authentic and approved content of holy scriptures. All Christian Bibles are believed to be essentially the same—the differences being primarily variations in typography, format and binding. For example, the average pious American is not aware that the differences between the King James version of the Bible and the American revised version embodies anything more than variations in the printing art and the indentation of verses. It is to him simply a "new-fangled" printing job.

To a person who is thoroughly familiar with scholarly views of the nature and composition of the Bible and not in real touch with orthodoxy the above description of the attitude towards holy scriptures entertained by the orthodox person might seem a gross, if not vulgar, caricature. The fact is, however, that the above is a faithful and exact description of the view of the Bible entertained by all orthodox laymen in the United States and by great majority of orthodox clergymen. Indeed, if one desired to be either humorous or sarcastic, he could cite individual examples of Fundamentalist appraisals of the Bible which would make the above summary of orthodox views appear

almost a scholarly assessment of the facts about the Bible. It may be almost incredible that anyone could entertain such views of the Bible but the solemn truth remains that such is the fact. Indeed, it would be very difficult for the average American to possess any other attitude toward the Scriptures. He has almost no opportunity or incentive to read books presenting a clear and popular summary of the results of biblical criticism, and very few laymen possess the time, patience and learning necessary to arrive at a critical view of the Bible on the basis of their own reading of the book. Further, there seems to be no direct relationship between frequent and repeated readings of the Bible and a skeptical attitude towards its contents. As Professor Robinson once remarked, it might almost be said that those who know most of the Bible seem to know the least about it.

III. THE ESSENTIAL FACTS IN REGARD TO THE HEBREW AND CHRISTIAN BIBLE

In setting forth some of the more relevant facts designed to give us a clear and reasonable view of the nature of the Bible, we do not pretend to be divulging any novel discoveries. Many of the essential facts in regard to the nature of the Bible were understood by critical scholars and philosophers in the year 1800. Tom Paine possessed a far more rational view of the Bible than the one which John Roach Straton or Cardinal Hayes expounds in the second quarter of the twentieth century. Indeed, what we shall have to say represents only a very brief and selected summary of the commonplaces disseminated in any self-respecting theological seminary in America today. Yet we believe that every candid reader of what follows will be compelled to admit that these few and highly incomplete

observations will serve thoroughly to undermine the orthodox view of the Bible and will demonstrate that it has no valid claim to exercise the dominating intellectual influence which it has maintained over the majority of those living in western civilization down to our own day.

Doubts were voiced in regard to certain traditional notions of the authorship of the Bible by some of the more critical Church Fathers in the later Roman Empire, but the first scholar to raise serious questions about the conventional view of the authorship of the Bible was a great Jewish scholar, Iben Ezra, who, about 1150 A.D., seriously challenged the notion of the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch. In the seventeenth century the distinguished critical philosopher, Thomas Hobbes, questioned the Mosaic authorship on the basis of considerations of common sense rather than textual and historical scholarship. He pointed out how unusual it was for an author, while still writing his autobiography, to be able to call attention to his death and to boast that he was so well buried that no one for hundreds of years had been able to locate his grave. Yet the Pentateuch tells of this successful secrecy in the burial of Moses and describes in detail the grief of the Jews following his death. The Jewish scholar, Baruch Spinoza, a younger contemporary of Hobbes, began the truly critical study of the origin of Genesis, showed that Genesis could not have been written by a single author at any one time, and offered evidence to discredit the theory of the Mosaic authorship.

In the middle of the eighteenth century a brilliant French physician, Jean Astruc, outlined crudely what has come to be accepted as the accurate version of the nature and composition of the Pentateuch. The next decisive step was taken by Karl David Ilgen at the very close of the eighteenth century. He pointed out that there were at

least seventeen different documents in Genesis, with three of the major sources which we have since accepted as correct. In the century following Ilgen there was remarkable progress in the difficult problem of unraveling the authorship of the Old Testament. Among the leading names associated with this great conquest of scholarship are W. M. L. DeWette, Hermann Hupfeld, Bishop John William Colenso, Abraham Kuenen, Bernhard Duhm, and Julius Wellhausen. Wellhausen brought Old Testament criticism to completion and is usually looked upon as the master scholar in this field. Since his day splendid work has been done by T. K. Cheyne, S. R. Driver, B. W. Bacon and others.

The critical process has been carried beyond a mere study of the text of the Old Testament. The brilliant Cambridge professor, William Robertson Smith, in his famous *Religion of the Semites*, proved for all time that there was nothing unique about the Jewish religion and indicated many points of similarity between the religion of the ancient Hebrews and the religious beliefs and practices of the other branches of the Semitic peoples. Pursuing this line of investigation more thoroughly and precisely, scholars like Delitzsch, Winckler and Rogers have made clear the profound influence of Babylonian mythology and religious tradition upon the religion of the Hebrews, particularly in the way of the adoption of the Babylonian cosmology, creation tales and early historical myths, such as the Tower of Babel and the Deluge. R. H. Charles and others have done equally significant work in indicating the Persian foundations of the late Jewish version of what has become the typically Christian doctrine of the Devil, hell, and a vivid immortality of the soul.

The progress of scholarship devoted to ascertaining the facts in regard to the dates and authorship of the New

Testament books has paralleled the development of Old Testament criticism. The earliest important figure, comparable to Astruc in Old Testament scholarship, was Hermann Samuel Reimarus (1694-1768). His patient researches were properly appreciated and published to the world by the great German writer, Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, in the decade after Reimarus' death. Important work was also done by the eminent German philosopher, Johann Gottfried von Herder in the last quarter of the eighteenth century. In the nineteenth century there was rapid progress, particularly after the decade of the thirties. The great names here are Ferdinand Christian Baur, D. F. Strauss, Bruno Bauer, Adolph Harnack, Alfred Loisy, Albert Schweitzer, Frederick Cornwallis Conybeare, Paul Wernle and others. Scholars like Harnack and Loisy in New Testament criticism are comparable to experts like Wellhausen in Old Testament scholarship, though we must not forget that Wellhausen himself has done remarkable work on New Testament criticism. Just as Robertson Smith, Delitzsch, Rogers, Charles and others have shown the historical derivation and oriental affinities of the ancient Jewish religion, so writers like Cumont, Glover, Loisy, Angus and others have made clear the vast number of contemporary religious, philosophical and cultural influences that combined to produce historic Christianity. They have made it certain that Christianity, far from being the pure faith once for all delivered to the saints by Jesus, is actually one of the most complex and synthetic of all world religions, combining within itself not only Jewish elements but also decisive influences from most of the pagan civilizations of the Mediterranean basin. We shall deal with this point more thoroughly when we take up the problem of Jesus and Christianity in the light of modern knowledge.

The few facts we have assembled above relative to the progress of scholarship in clearing up the complicated problems involved in the dates, authorship and composition of the Bible are important chiefly as showing that during the last century and a half we have piled up absolutely conclusive proof of the human authorship of the Bible and have disposed for all time of the orthodox notion of its uniquely inspired nature as a product of divine revelation.

We assume that it will not be necessary to argue with any reader of the present work relative to the Fundamentalist conception that the Bible was directly dictated by God. If any such argument were necessary to convince the sceptical, it would suffice to refer to such things as the frequent and vital contradictions in Holy Writ, the many instances in which widely different descriptions are offered regarding the same events, the frequent repetitions, the impossible and preposterous statements such as Joshua's stopping the sun or the edifying conversation of Baalam's ass, the crude notions expressed of God Himself, and the host of passages radiating cruelty, vulgarity and obscenity. Most conclusive of all is the fact that scholarship has demonstrated that the Bible was written by man and has shown by whom, at what times, and for what purposes it was written. It is clearly evident that the Bible is a purely secular product of human ingenuity quite as much as the Gilgamesh Epic, the code of Hammurabi, the Homeric poems, Pliny's Epistles, Virgil's *Aeneid* or Dante's *Divine Comedy*. Therefore, no informed and reasonable person can expect the Bible to possess any greater validity or wisdom relative to religion, ethics, history or science than the civilization which produced the Bible could itself muster. Religious notions of the eighth century B.C. which appear in the Bible are entitled to no more respect than we should assign to the general wisdom

and culture of any typical eighth century B.C. society dwelling in the near Orient. Biblical science of the sixth or seventh century B.C. is worth just as much as the secular scientific views of that period and no more.

In short, there is no reason for taking the biblical views on religion more seriously than we do the religious beliefs embodied in the other contemporary cults of the near Orient; no reason for regarding biblical history as any more credible than the exaggerated historical accounts set down by secular writers in the same period; and no reason for taking the biblical science any more solemnly than we do the scientific writings of Pliny the Elder. Indeed, the scientific lore embodied in Pliny's *Natural History* is infinitely more developed and sophisticated than the science of the Bible. Yet, today, we normally read such things as book seven of Pliny's *Natural History* in part out of historical curiosity and in part for deliberate amusement. There is not the slightest reason why we should not approach the earlier chapters of Genesis with a similar attitude of ironic detachment.

We may now take up in order the more important assumptions of the Fundamentalists in regard to the Bible and indicate how well they stand up under the test of the rudiments of biblical scholarship. To consider first the question of the derivation of the term Bible, we find that it did not mean in any sense a unique book, or "The Book," as the Fundamentalist expositor so often contends. The term Bible was first used to refer to the Hebrew Scriptures in a late apocryphal book, *First Maccabees*, and was first applied to the entire Old and New Testaments at the close of the second century A.D. The term was derived from the Greek "Ta bibila," meaning "The Little Books." Therefore, the term Bible both literally and historically means a collection of little books, and the Bible is really

just this, namely, a collection of some forty-six little books written between the thirteenth century before Christ and the close of the second century of the Christian era. Nothing could be more absurd than to attempt to justify the sacredness, uniqueness and divine revelation of the Bible on the ground that it has not been subsequently duplicated; in other words, that humanity has produced but one Bible. In the first place, it may be pointed out that there are innumerable holy books which constitute the bibles of other cults, and therefore the Hebrew and Christian Bible is by no means unique in its pretensions to sanctity and divine origin. Further, to hold that the Bible is divinely inspired because it has never been duplicated is a most specious and childish argument. No great book of secular literature has ever been duplicated. There has never been a second Plato's *Republic*, a second Aristotle's *Politics*, a second Lucretius' *De Rerum Natura*, a second *Divine Comedy*, or a second Bacon's *Advancement of Learning*.

In regard to the language used by God in dictating the Bible, or more sensibly, the language used by the secular authors of the Bible, it will hardly be necessary to insist that neither God nor the secular scribes used the modern English, German, French, Italian or Russian languages. To scholars it is equally absurd to hold that the Bible was either dictated or written in a so-called Hebrew language, for there has never been any such thing as a unique, special or distinct Hebrew tongue. If there is any historical validity whatever in the legend of Abraham, he, of course, spoke the Babylonian or Chaldean version of the Semitic language which was used in the area from which he is supposed to have migrated. The Semitic invaders of the Palestinian area, among whom were the Jews, must certainly have spoken the Canaanite version of the Semitic

languages. If there is any truth in the classic legend that a considerable group of the Jews left Palestine, lived in Egypt for several centuries and were later led out of bondage by Moses, it is quite evident that they must have adopted the Egyptian language during their stay in Egypt. Whatever the linguistic developments connected with the putative excursion into Egypt, it is certain that the earliest of the Old Testament books were written in the Hebrew variation of the Canaanite dialect. In the later period of their history, particularly after the Persian conquest, the Hebrews generally adopted the Aramaic dialect which was widely used throughout western Asia as the language of commerce and conversation. Therefore, the Semitic languages used by the Jews appeared to have been in chronological order, the Chaldean, the Canaanite and the Aramaic. There never was and never has been any such thing as a distinct Hebrew language. Old Testament Hebrew was but the Hebrew version of the Canaanite branch of the Semitic language. The present-day Yiddish is essentially a combination of German words and Semitic characters. All of the canonical Old Testament books, with the exception of parts of Ezra, Daniel and Jeremiah X, 7, were written in the Old Testament Hebrew. These exceptions were written in Aramaic, as was also the "oral gospel" used by the authors of Matthew and Luke in compiling their gospels. Those portions of the Hebrew Bible which antedate 280 B.C. were translated at that time into Greek in what is known as the famous *Septuagint*. Those Hebrew writings later than 280 B.C. were written down in Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek. All of the books of the New Testament were first composed in Greek. In the last decade of the fourth century A.D. Saint Jerome, a great Catholic scholar, translated the Bible from Hebrew and Greek texts into Latin—the well-known *Vulgate*. The

first English Bible was that brought out by John Wycliffe in 1385, and the authorized version, the so-called King James Bible, was produced in 1611. The Bible has been translated into the vernacular of countries using languages other than English at various dates since the close of the Middle Ages. Perhaps the most famous of these translations was the historic rendition of the Bible into German by Martin Luther in the first half of the sixteenth century.

In no matter are the orthodox more thoroughly mistaken than in their supposition that the order in which the books appear in the Bible represents the precise chronological order in which they were written. For example, the first two chapters of Genesis date from the ninth and eighth centuries B.C. while some of the very ancient poems which appear much further on in the Old Testament date from the twelfth century. The last book of the canonical Old Testament is the Book of Malachi, which was composed in the middle of the fifth century B.C. It is thus more than a century and a half earlier than Chronicles-Ezra-Nehemiah which were written sometime in the third century. Yet Chronicles-Ezra-Nehemiah occupy the very central portion of the Old Testament. The Book of Daniel precedes the Book of Amos, yet Daniel dates from the middle of the second century B.C. and Amos from the middle of the eighth.

The problem of arranging the Old Testament in strictly chronological order is one of the most complex tasks of scholarship, as anyone can see who will take the trouble to consult a book like Professor Charles Foster Kent's *Students Old Testament Logically and Chronologically Arranged.* It is a problem, indeed, which only the skilled and veteran biblical scholar could hope to execute or even to interpret intelligently. At times in the same book in the Old Testament one will encounter strains and passages which

are separated by centuries in the date of their authorship. The same situation holds true in regard to the New Testament except that it is a far less complicated matter here. The New Testament has fewer books and they were all written within approximately one century. The Old Testament was compiled over a period of more than a thousand years which separate the oldest poems from the Book of Daniel and Ecclesiastes. For example, in the New Testament the Pauline Epistles follow the Synoptic Gospels, whereas the writings of St. Paul are actually the earliest books in the New Testament. The Gospel of Matthew precedes the Gospel of Mark, yet Mark is probably a decade earlier than Matthew.

We may now consider the conventional notion that Moses wrote the Pentateuch under divine guidance, that David composed the Psalms, and Solomon Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and the Song of Songs. No contention is more thoroughly established or uniformly accepted by scholars than the statement that Moses could not possibly have had anything to do with the writing of the Pentateuch. In the first place, there is no definitive evidence that Moses was an actual historic character. If, however, there is any truth whatever in the legends concerning him which appear in the Old Testament, he would only have been able to write down the Pentateuch in Egyptian hieroglyphs, if indeed he would have been able to write at all. Even more important is the fact which we have already touched upon, namely, that the Pentateuch records many events subsequent to Moses' age, to say nothing of the description of Moses' funeral, and the boast in regard to the success of his secret burial. Finally, much of the ceremonial law and ritual in the Pentateuch are obviously late priestly inventions, dating from sometime between the seventh and fourth centuries B.C. There is no more pro-

bability that David compiled the Psalms or Solomon the wisdom literature. David and Solomon lived, according to the best historical information available, at the close of the eleventh and the opening of the tenth centuries B.C. Yet the Psalms, Proverbs and Ecclestiastes are very late products of Hebrew cultural and literary development, dating from around 300 B.C. to the middle of the first century of the Christian era. The Song of Songs is an erotic lyric as late as the Psalms and the wisdom literature, and there is not any evidence that the author even dedicated this poem to Solomon. One could go on at great length demonstrating the fallacious nature of the orthodox notion of the specific authorship of the books of the Bible, but the above examples will suffice for our purpose. Perhaps the best way in which one can emphasize the wide divergence between the traditional views and the facts established by scholarship is to set forth very briefly indeed certain basic facts about the Pentateuch.

As we have already pointed out, it is the opinion of the pious Jew and Christian that the Pentateuch was dictated by God to Moses, a great Hebrew statesman and faithful amanuensis, sometime during the thirteenth century before Christ. Biblical scholars have shown that, in the first place, the very term Pentateuch is a misconception and a misnomer. Instead of being made up of five books it really constitutes a block of eleven, namely, the first twelve books of the Bible, leaving out the Book of Ruth, which is a late product of the Persian or Greek periods. Far from being the creation of a single author who brought out his work within a period of a few years, the Pentateuch was actually compiled by at least four groups of authors writing over a broad sweep of time which extended from the close of the tenth century B.C. to the middle of the fifth century B.C. There are at least four basic strains making up this

section of the Bible. The earliest, or so-called "J" source, is a product of the late tenth or early ninth century. It is called "J" because the writers give to the Hebrew God the term "Jahveh." The second source in chronological order is known as the "E" source, because the authors here use the term "Elohim" to describe the deity. It comes from the eighth century. The third foundation document is the Book of Deuteronomy, written sometime between 650 and 620 B.C. Scholars refer to this as "D." The fourth and final document is the so-called "priestly"—"P"—source and dates from somewhere between 586 and 450 B.C. Each of these four sources was the product of a group of writers rather than a single author.

None of these four foundation documents exists in the Bible in exactly the same form in which it was written down. All were altered in differing degrees by subsequent editors. Nor is the Pentateuch made up of "J," "E," "D" and "P" strung along in serial order. These sources were combined by later editors and intermingled in an almost inextricable fashion. It is this fact of subsequent editing and combination which made the unraveling of the authorship and composition of the Pentateuch so complex a problem as to require a century of scholarly endeavor. "J" and "E" were edited and combined sometime around the close of the eighth century B.C. Then, "J," "E" and "D" were combined and edited between 620 and 450 B.C. Finally, in the middle of the fifth century B.C., "J," "E" and "D," already much modified and edited and re-edited, were joined with "P" to constitute the historic Pentateuch as we have it in the Old Testament. These facts about the Pentateuch, altogether too briefly and incompletely recounted to give any true picture of the complexity of the situation, will show how far from the truth is the simple pietistic notion of the Pentateuch which we summarized

at the outset. Perhaps we can make the nature of the Bible somewhat more clear by quoting Professor James T. Shotwell's striking comparison of the Bible with a hypothetical Greek work of similar character and composition:[2]

Let us imagine, for instance, that instead of the Jewish scriptures we are talking of those of the Greeks. Suppose that the heritage of Hellas had been preserved to us in the form of a Bible. What would be the character of the book? We should begin, perhaps, with a few passages from Hesiod on the birth of the gods and the dawn of civilization mingled with fragments of the *Illiad* and both set into long excerpts from Herodotus. The dialogues of Plato might be given by Homeric heroes and the text of the great dramatists (instead of the prophets) be preserved interspersed one with another and clogged with the uninspired and uninspiring comments of Alexandrian savants. Then imagine that the sense of their authority was so much obscured as centuries passed, that philosophers—for philosophers were to Greece what the theologians were to Israel—came to believe that the large part of this composite work of history and philosophy had been first written down by Solon as the deliverance of the oracle of Apollo at Delphi. Then, finally, imagine that the text became stereotyped and sacred, even the words taboo, and became the heritage of alien peoples who knew nothing more of Greek history than what this compilation contained. Such, with some little exaggeration, would be a Hellenic Bible after the fashion of the Bible of the Jews. If the comparison be a little overdrawn there is no danger but that we shall make sufficient mental reservations to prevent us from carrying it too far. Upon the whole, so far as form and structure go, the analogy holds remarkably well.

The recognition that the Bible is a purely secular product of fallible and relatively ignorant men brings by implication a tremendous revolution in our attitude toward this book. The possibility of explaining away dubious, impossible or preposterous passages on the hypothesis of

[2] Shotwell, *An Introduction to the History of History*, p. 82.

miracles or through the technique of allegory is no longer permissible. It must be recognized and admitted that apparent contradictions are real contradictions and that preposterous and incredible statements are indeed incapable of belief. Further, any proved historical inaccuracies in the Old Testament account of either sacred or secular history demonstrate the unreliability of the Bible as history. If obscenity is harmful to the readers of modern erotic novels, the obscenities of the Bible must be regarded as equally disastrous in their effect upon readers of the Holy Scriptures. Finally, it is obvious that biblical passages cannot be used intelligently and logically except when interpreted in the context in which they appear and when understood in the light of times in which they were composed. The frequent assumption that the author of an eighth century passage wrote with his prophetic eye fixed upon the conditions of the time of Jesus or those of the twentieth century of the Christian era is, of course, the most obvious nonsense. Many passages of the Bible give evidence of dubious wisdom and logic even when viewed in terms of the age which produced them; they obviously possess infinitely less validity when interpreted in the light of our own day or when applied to the issues of contemporary civilization. In short, the Bible, when viewed in modern perspective, loses all significance whatever save that which it possesses as a source-book of religious and cultural evolution.

We may next investigate the Fundamentalist assertion that the original text of the Bible, as dictated by God, is actually in existence today and has been used by those who have, under divine guidance, employed it in translating the Bible into Latin and the vernacular languages. The fact is that there is no complete text of the Bible extant which possesses any antiquity. The oldest Hebrew

texts of the Old Testament date from the late seventh and eighth centuries of the Christian era. We have nothing whatever of the hypothetical Hebrew text which was used in translating the Old Testament from the original Semitic language into Greek at the opening of the third century before Christ. Therefore, we have no means of knowing as to how exactly even the original edition of the Greek translation (280 B.C.) reproduced the Semitic version from which it was prepared. The Semitic text of the Old Testament permitted of many possible renditions and we have no way of being certain that the translators faithfully reproduced the thought of the original authors of the biblical books. Indeed, few of the books in the Hebrew version came to the translators of the *Septuagint* as they had been originally written down. They had already been seriously modified by the previous editing done by the Jews themselves.

The oldest Greek manuscripts of the Bible date from the fourth century A.D., and these are not complete. These manuscripts are known as the *Codex Sinaiticus* and the *Codex Vaticanus*. There are two other manuscripts, still more incomplete, which date from the fifth century and a very incomplete edition of the New Testament which dates from the sixth century. In other word, of all the copies of the Old Testament which were in circulation in the seven centuries between the translation of the *Septuagint* and the copying of the *Codex Sinaiticus* not a single one has survived. Seven centuries of alteration and variation passed without our being able to check up in any decisive fashion upon the changes in the original Greek text which took place over this long interval of time. Likewise, about three centuries intervened between the time of the writing down of the original books of the New Testament and the pre-

paration of these fourth century manuscripts which are the earliest copies of the New Testament that we possess.

There is no doubt that many and extensive variations crept into these manuscripts as they were copied and recopied in various parts of the Mediterranean area. When we take all of the manuscripts of the Greek New Testament we find such extensive divergences in their renditions that they have to be divided into four major families or groups. They are thus classified in these four families on the basis of their diversified rendition of various passages in the New Testament. When one considers the variations in the rendition of Holy Writ in these manuscripts as a whole, he finds that they contain around two hundred thousand different readings of parts of the New Testament, in other words, averaging about six different presentations of each verse of the New Testament. Professor W. M. Forrest in his interesting little book, *Do Fundamentalists Play Fair?* has summarized in splendid fashion the amazing extent of these variations which crept into the Greek text of the New Testament during a period of several centuries:[3]

On an appeal to the Greek New Testament it is discovered that its manuscripts differ so radically that they have to be grouped in four well-marked families. Which family will you adopt as giving the correct text? True to its history of always taking the wrong position, to the damage of faith, and never leaving it until driven out by scholarship, conservatives took the wrong family. The Received Text was carelessly derived from a few faulty manuscripts of the latest and worst of the four groups of Greek Testaments. But any one taken has its faults. If you decide to take them all as representing the total testimony as to inspired Scripture you will find that they contain from 150,000 to 200,000 different readings. That is, they will average six different answers to every verse in the New

[3] Forrest, *Do the Fundamentalists Play Fair?*, p. 53.

Testament when you ask them just what are the infallible words of God. Rather bad for fundamentalism, even though most of the divergencies are of slight consequence to scholars.

Of course, it is necessary in fairness and honesty to point out that the majority of these variations are not matters of great consequence as far as the sense of the passages are concerned, but the situation involved is of the utmost significance when considered in relation to the expectation of recovering and identifying the exact words of Christ or any of the Apostles. Alterations and interpolations did not cease, however, with the copying of the ancient Greek manuscripts of the New Testament. The process of alteration was going on as late as the time of Erasmus, who interpolated verse seven of the fifth chapter of the First Epistle of John which refers to the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost as witnesses of Jesus and his mission.

We pointed out earlier in the chapter that the orthodox Jew and Christian believe that the ancient Jewish writers were thoroughly convinced of the divine nature of their sacred books and guarded against their alteration and loss with the utmost care and the fiercest jealousy. As an actual matter of fact, we have the most convincing evidence that, down to the period of the conquest of the Jews and their subsequent persecutions, the Jews altered and edited their holy writings with the utmost freedom. They interchanged passages, left out certain sections, rearranged books and the like with the greatest independence. At times they deliberately faked the antiquity of books in order to give them greater prestige and force. For example, Deuteronomy, a seventh century book, was assigned to the era of Moses, and Daniel, a second century book, was represented as dating from the early sixth century. Professor Archibald Duff, in his brilliant little *History of*

Old Testament Criticism, presents a most illuminating account of the astonishing freedom with which the Jews altered and criticized their supposedly sacred literature.

Most striking of all is the fact that many books originally in the Old Testament have been entirely lost as to content. Just how many have thus disappeared we have no means of knowing. We can only detect such a loss when, in the text of one of the extant books of the Old Testament, there is a reference by name to a book the content of which has since disappeared from the Bible. We cannot, of course, ascertain with any precision as to how many more books have been lost both as to name and content alike. In the Old Testament, as it stands today, there are references to the following twenty-two books which no longer are to be found in the Bible:

Book of the Wars of Yahveh—("the Lord"), Num. xxi. 14.
Book of Jasher, Josh. x. 13; 2 Sam. i. 18.
Book of Constitution for the Kingdom, 1 Sam. x. 25.
Book of the Acts of Solomon, 1 Kgs. xi. 41.
Book of Visions of Iddo the Seer, 2 Chr. ix. 29.
Midrash Iddo, 2 Chr. xiii. 22.
Book of Iddo the Seer on Genealogies, 2 Chr. xii. 15.
Book of Shemaiah the Prophet, 2 Chr. xii. 15.
Book of Nathan the Prophet, 2 Chr. ix. 29; 1 Chr. xxix. 29.
Book of Ahijah the Shilonite, 2 Chr. ix. 29.
Book of Gad the Seer, 1 Chr. xxix. 29.
Book of Samuel the Seer, 1 Chr. xxix. 29.
Book of Jehu, Son of Hanani, 2 Chr. xx. 34.
Burned Book of Jeremiah, Jer. xxxvi. 4-23.
Memoir on Amalekite War, Ex. xvii. 14.
Book of Isaiah upon Uzziah, 2 Chr. xxvi. 22.
Book of Chronicles of Kings of Judah, 1 Kgs. xiv. 21; xv. 7, etc.
Book of Chronicles of Kings of Israel, 1 Kgs. xiv. 19, etc.
Book of Chronicles of King David, 1 Chr. xxvii. 24.
Book of Kings of Israel and Judah, 2 Chr. xxxv. 27; xxxvi. 8.

Midrash on the Book of Kings, 2 Chr. xxiv. 27.
Copy of this law in a Book, Deut. xvii. 18; 2 Kgs. xxii. 8.

In other words, as one scholar has expressed it, it is quite possible that in the extant Old Testament and non-biblical writings of the ancient Jews we have but a few fragments of the total literary product of the Hebrew peoples in the centuries preceding the Christian era. This matter of the free editing, alteration, rearrangement, fabrication, and even complete loss of books originally in the Bible, raises very important implications relative to the hypothesis of the divine dictation of the Bible. If God had taken all the time which he is assumed by the Fundamentalists to have devoted to the dictation of his word, it is scarcely likely that he would have allowed his earthly subjects to distort and even to lose these precious products of divine revelation.

We have pointed out that the traditional religionists hold that the Bible solely expresses the will of God, thus allowing no place for the intervention and interference of human subjectivity. In reality, however, there are few books in the Bible which have not been written to advance the cause of some specific race, class, dynasty, sect or philosophy. The Pentateuch is devoted to a large extent to propaganda in behalf of the Jewish race and their tribal God, Yahweh. Deuteronomy embodied the effort at a great moral reconstruction among the Jews, as likewise did the books of Amos and other leading prophets. Chronicles-Ezra-Nehemiah was an effort to glorify the Hebrew past, especially the age of David and Solomon. If some of the books of the Old Testament represent propaganda for the prophetic view of Hebrew religion, others expound the interest and viewpoint of the priestly class. The same tendencies appear in the New Testament. The book of Mat-

thew is powerfully colored by the desire to represent Jesus as the veritable Jewish Messiah and to commend him to the Jewish people. Luke, on the other hand, takes a broader view and tries to commend Jesus to the Roman Empire. This broad missionary outlook, which represents Jesus as the potential saviour of mankind, likewise appears in the Epistles of St. Paul. In the Gospel of John we find a decisive intrusion of Hellenistic metaphysics, and Christ emerges in the form of the Platonic *Logos*. In other words, if the Bible is completely inexplicable on the hypothesis of divine authorship, it becomes quite understandable when interpreted in the light of the human classes and interests which played a part in its composition. As a human document it is at least intelligible.

Among the faithful there is no doubt whatever as to what books belong in the Bible. It is held by such people that God dictated all of the books of the Bible and, likewise, that all the books he dictated are embodied in the Bible. To such persons there is no question whatever as to what books should be included in or excluded from the Bible. Indeed, most of them are unaware that there is any such problem as that of the authentic canon of the Old and New Testaments. Some of the pious may be troubled at times by the existence of a few books known as the Apocrypha, which are included at the close of the Old Testament in the Catholic Bible. But this seldom arises as a practical issue with the orthodox. Protestant Bibles do not ordinarily reproduce the Apocrypha and the Catholic layman rarely consults his Bible directly.

The fact is, however, that the determination of the authentic books of the Bible, namely, those which were dictated by God, was a problem which troubled devout scholars for hundreds, if not thousands, of years. The Old and New Testaments represent but a small minority of

the religious writings of the Jews and Christians. Many other religious writings were composed by the Jews during the period in which the Old Testament, particularly the later sections, was being written out. Further, in the two centuries between the latest Old Testament book, Daniel, and the first work in the New Testament, Paul's Epistle to the Thessalonians, the Jews did not cease their literary productivity. In fact, they wrote more voluminously in this age than at any time in their previous history. Likewise the Christian writings did not cease with the reputed works of the Apostles. There was a feverish literary activity in the second and third centuries of the Christian era. As a result there grew up a tremendous body of religious literature which is technically known as the Apocryphal and Apocalyptical writings. They mount up to a bulk vastly exceeding that of the combined Old and New Testaments as they have been accepted by the Christians. A British scholar, Professor R. H. Charles, has edited this material which grew up along with and following the compilation of the Old Testament in a tremendous two-volume compilation entitled, *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament in English.* This is in itself alone about twice as extensive as the Christian Bible and to it must be added the apocryphal and apocalyptic writings of the New Testament.

It is obvious that this situation presented a serious problem to pious scholars, who were compelled to select from this vast mass of religious materials those sections which were divinely inspired and to reject those which were spurious, man-made, and might be consulted by the pious reader to his own ultimate confusion and damnation. There has never been any absolute agreement as to the canon of the Old Testament. The Christians took over the Hebrew Bible with little or no questioning or scepticism.

They adopted it credulously and *en bloc* as the authorized word of God and the sole repository of this divine revelation to man. The absolute authenticity of its books has never been determined finally by any authoritative council of the faithful. The great mass of apocalyptic books are rejected by both the Catholics and Protestants. The Catholics, however, at the Council of Trent in 1543, decided to retain the Apocrypha as a part of the divinely inspired Holy Scriptures. A large group of the Protestants, at the Synod of Dort in 1618 and at the Westminster Assembly in 1643, rejected the Apocrypha, and the great majority of Protestants do not embody the Apocrypha in their printed Bibles. Luther adopted a compromise attitude, namely, that of printing the Apocrypha at the close of the Old Testament but representing it as a lower order of religious writing than the divinely inspired canon.

It is evident that the decision taken as to inspired and non-inspired books was wholly arbitrary and in many cases bore no relation whatever to the intrinsic merits of the books included or excluded. For example, Chronicles-Ezra-Nehemiah is one of the most unreliable books of history ever compiled in the history of historical writing. First Maccabees is, however, one of the finest bits of historical writing of its age. Chronicles-Ezra-Nehemiah is, nevertheless, included in the canon of the Old Testament, while First Maccabees is relegated to the Apocrypha. The Song of Solomon, while a pleasing erotic poem, is scarcely suitable reading for pure and pious Jews and Christians. Ecclesiasticus is, however, by all odds the finest bit of wisdom literature which the Jews produced. Yet, the Song of Solomon is embodied in the supposedly inspired canon, whereas Ecclesiasticus is condemned to the obscurity of the Apocrypha.

The apocryphal and apocalyptic books which grew up

about the New Testament were not as extensive as those which were a by-product of the Old Testament, but they mounted up to a considerable bulk. By the opening of the third century A.D. the Christians had come to be fairly well agreed as to the authentic books of the New Testament, and the term New Testament was first used by the church father Tertullian about 225 A.D. There was no hesitation in excluding most of this apocryphal and apocalyptic literature, but there was considerable controversy accompanying the final decision as to the canon of the New Testament. There was much indecision as to the inclusion of Hebrews, second Peter, Jude and Revelation. The canon of the New Testament, as we now have it, was officially sanctioned at the Council of Trullo in 692.

It is, of course, obvious to scholars that all discussion about canonical and non-canonical books is irrelevant and misconceived. Considerations and decisions of this sort can find rational justification only on the hypothesis of the direct divine revelation and inspiration of certain books. Once the modern point of view is introduced, the whole question of divine inspiration immediately and entirely evaporates. When the hypothesis of inspiration is surrendered, then the basis for the distinction between canonical and non-canonical works breaks down. All the religious writings of the Jews and Christians need to be perused in order to get a complete and accurate view of their religious doctrines. Therefore, in order to understand the evolution of Judaism and Christianity one would need to examine carefully, not only the Old and New Testament but all Jewish and Christian writings down to our own day. The great Jewish rabbis of the Middle Ages, the church fathers, the medieval theologians, the Protestant reformers and the like have as legitimate a place in the religious history of western Christendom as the ancient Hebrew prophets

or St. Paul. Indeed, the limitation of Scriptures to the canonical books has definitely obscured and reduced our knowledge of the religious development of both Judaism and Christianity. With the possible exception of the prophetic revolution in the eighth century B.C., by all odds the most important religious developments in the history of Judaism came between the third century B.C. and the second century A.D. This material on religious thought and activities between the Old and New Testaments is entirely unknown to the average Jewish and Christian layman and can only be understood on the basis of a reading of the complete apocryphal and apocalyptic literature. Likewise with Christianity, the most important elements which entered into the formation of historical Christianity were those introduced between New Testament times and those of St. Augustine. Therefore, the writings of the church fathers constitute far more valuable material on the history of Christianity than the canonical New Testament literature, but this information is a closed book to all Protestant laymen and is very imperfectly understood by the average Catholic layman.

The average reader of the Protestant Bible has no comprehension of what is meant by the different editions of the Bible. He is generally familiar only with the King James Version and regards this as the authentic text of God's word. As we have indicated above, the typical believer takes it for granted that God dictated the Bible in the language of the King James Version (or, if a German, in the language of Luther's translation). If he has heard of the Revised Version he tends to look upon it with suspicion and to view it as the inferior product of the meddling of higher critics. This dislike is frequently intensified by the greater difficulty of locating the verses in the Revised Version when the communicant is called upon for re-

sponsive reading and the like. The faithful do not realize that the Revised Version is in every way superior to the King James edition. It eliminates words and phrases which were current in 1611 but have now become obsolete. Further, whereas the translators in 1611 had only one imperfect and late manuscript to work with, those who prepared the Revised Version of 1901 (1881, English) had at their command the early codices which we mentioned above. Further, they removed many obvious emendations and interpolations. The text of the Revised Version is much more nearly authentic than the King James Version.

Many of the bitter critics of the Bible have attacked Holy Scriptures as a vicious work, glorifying primitive cruelties and reeking with obscene passages. They quote such things as the tenth chapter of Joshua, containing among others the following passages:

> So Joshua smote all the land, the hill-country and the South, and the lowland, and the slopes, and all their kings: he left none remaining, but he utterly destroyed all that breathed as Jehovah, the God of Israel, commanded. And Joshua smote them from Kadesh-barnea even unto Gaza, and all the country of Goshen, even unto Gibeon. And all these kings and their land did Joshua take at one time, because Jehovah, the God of Israel, fought for Israel.

Such passages as these, the critics contend, glorify military brutalities and the spirit of war as a religious duty and a service to the Lord. As Kirby Page remarks in his *Jesus or Christianity?:*

> Literally hundreds of passages of this character could be cited. An authoritative study of this whole question was published recently as a doctor's thesis at Teachers College, Columbia University, under the title, *The God of the Old Testamen in Relation to War.* The major conclusion of the author, Dr. Marion J. Benedict, is summarized as follows: "Yahweh

has been found to be a God of war throughout most of the Old Testament material. In fact, the book of Ruth is practically the only entire document in which Yahweh is not directly or indirectly associated with warfare." Here and there are to be found notable exceptions to this view, chiefly in Amos, Deuteronomy, Jonah, and Isaiah 19:18-25. But these exceptions only serve to emphasize the all but universal idea that Yahweh was a god of war.

Other critics have prepared anthologies of scriptural obscenity, a representative sample of which we reproduce below:

Daughters have sexual intercourse with their father. Genesis 19:30-38.

Amon rapes his sister. 2 Samuel 13: verses 12 & 14.

Absalom violates his father's concubines. 2 Sam. 16:21.

Rachel rents her husband to Leah. Gen. 30:15, 16.

Abraham fornicates with maidservant. Gen. 16:3.

Life not worth living after coming of sexual impotence. I Kings, 1:1 seq.

Attempted seduction of Joseph by Potiphar's wife. Gen. 39:7-21.

Judah lies with his daughter-in-law. Gen. 38:14, 18.

Abusing a woman all night. Jud. 19:25.

Reuben commits incest. Gen. 35:22.

Dinah defiled by a prince. Gen. 34:2.

Prostituting daughters. Lev. 19:29.

The beautiful harlot. Ezek. 16:15.

Intercourse with relatives and animals. Levit. 18:6 to 23.

Eat dung and drink urine. Isa. 36:12. 2 Kings, 18:27.

Onan spills his seed. Gen. 38:8, 10.

Abram lends wife to Pharoah. Gen. 12:15, 18, 19.

Phallic representations of Yahweh. Ex. 24:4,5; Gen. 28; Isa. 19:19; Hos. 10:1; Josh. 24:26, 27; I Samuel, 7:12.

Worship of sexual organs—"groves" *(asherim)* 2 Kings, 21:7, 23:6. 2 Chron. 24:18. Isa. 17:8. Jud. 3:7. 2 Kings, 23: 15. 21:3. 17:10. 18:4. 1 Kings, 16:33. 15:13. 14:15. 14:23. Mic. 5:14. Deut. 12:3. Jer. 17:2. 2 Kings, 17:16. 13:6. 23:14.

I Kings, 18:19. 2 Chron. 34:3 & 4. 2 Chron. 14:3. 17:6. 33:3 & 19.

Raping a betrothed girl. Deut. 22:23 to 25.

How to use dung paddles. Deut. 23:12, 13, 14.

Prostitution. Hosea 2:2. 1: 2 & 3. 4:14 and on.

Rape of the captured girls. Numb. 31:18.

Solomon's 700 wives and 300 sporting women. 1 Kings 11:1, 2, 3.

Urinating against the wall. 1 Kings, 14:10. 16:11. 21:21. 2 Kings, 9:8. 1 Sam. 25:22 & 34.

Bible sanctions lying. Ezek. 14:9. Jere. 20:7. 4:10.

Cheating sanctioned. Deut. 14:21.

The King David test. I Kings, 1:1-4.

Testing virgins for the harem. Esther 2:12-17.

Angel Gabriel impregnates Elizabeth. Luke 1:5-25.

Polygamy. Deut. 21:13.

Two sisters lose virginity. Ezek. 23:3 to 21.

Harlot entices young man. Prov. 7:18. 23:27.

Ruth and Boaz. Ruth 3:16, 18.

Brother must marry sister-in-law. Deut. 25:5.

Sodomy. Jud. 19:24. Gen. 19:8.

Woman caught in adultery. John 8:3.

The natural uses of women. Rom. 1:26 & 27.

It is obvious that if the Boston judge who presided over the case of Dreiser's *American Tragedy* should adopt the same attitude with regard to the Bible, every bookseller in Boston would be held liable for a jail sentence in offering the Bible for sale in his bookshop.[4] This Boston judge contended that the general import and objective of a work was of no significance and that the test of obscenity was the inciting nature of specific passages, irrespective of the context from which the passages were selected. It is, of course, desirable to note that the Bible is far freer in its canonical form from obscene and brutal passages than

[4] See an article on this point in *The Lantern*, June, 1929; and Joseph Lewis, *The Bible Unmasked.*

it was when originally put down by the ancient Jews. It was subjected to many editings by Jewish scholars who purified the text at the same time that they were making other alterations.

The historical approach to the Bible leads, however, to a quite different attitude toward Holy Scriptures from that which characterizes either the pious believer or the professional critic of Scriptures. Brutal and obscene passages are exactly what we expect to find in the literature of culturally undeveloped peoples. We discover this sort of material sprinkled throughout anthropological literature dealing with primitive peoples and embodying the early historic legends of all great cultures. The only reason why any one could be shocked by the discovery of cruel, vulgar and obscene passages in the Bible is that we assume the Bible to be a sacred work and the product of divine revelation. That God could have dictated such passages as these is indeed a shocking thought. Once one abandons the hypothesis of the Bible as the product of the Deity, all cause for astonishment disappears. Rather we should be amazed if we did not find exactly what the record reveals, namely an account of the evolution of culture from the crudities of the early Hebrew nomads to the remarkable sophistication of the age of Philo.

It would have been unfortunate, indeed, if the Bible had been subjected to more editorial scrutiny by some early Comstocks who might have deleted all dubious passages. Such procedure, though it might have made the Bible more suitable reading for adolescent Sunday-School students, would have greatly decreased its significance as a source-book for the study of the evolution of religion, morals and culture. We should have been unable, for example, to have traced the evolution of the Deity from a phallic symbol to a barbarous and warlike tribal deity, and from this mili-

tary god of a barbarous people to the god of social justice of Amos and the god of love as expounded by Jesus. The real damage has not been done by faithfully including passages which reflect primitivity and barbarism, but rather by the orthodox Jewish and Christian insistence upon regarding such material as divinely inspired and suitable for the admiration and imitation of mankind in subsequent ages. Professor John Bagnall Bury has well emphasized this point in his brilliant little *History of the Freedom of Thought:*

> It was unfortunate that the early Christians had included in their Scripture the Jewish writings which reflect the ideas of a low stage of civilization and are full of savagery. It would be difficult to say how much harm has been done, in corrupting the morals of men, by the precepts and examples of inhumanity, violence and bigotry which the reverent reader of the Old Testament, implicitly believing in its inspiration, is bound to approve. It furnished an armory for the theory of persecution. The truth is that Sacred Books are an obstacle to moral and intellectual progress, because they consecrate the ideas of a given epoch, and its customs, as divinely appointed. Christianity, by adopting books of a long past age, placed in the path of human development a particularly nasty stumbling-block. It may occur to one to wonder how history might have been altered—altered it surely would have been—if the Christians had cut Jehovah out of their program and, content with the New Testament, had rejected the inspiration of the Old.

We should hope that the net outcome of these brief observations in regard to the actual nature of the Bible, in its cultural and literary setting, would be to make it clear for all time that the Bible is no more a holy or divinely inspired book than the writings of any other primitive or early historic peoples. Even the rudiments of historical scholarship and social science applied to a study of the

Bible make it obvious that there is not the slightest ground for upholding the orthodox notion of the direct and unique divine inspiration of the Jewish and Christian Bible. This being the case, one can only form a rational estimate of the validity of the Bible through judging its qualities as a strictly secular product. Once the Bible is subjected to critical appraisal as a human creation, its conventional pretensions are enormously deflated. As religion, which is the highest claim of the Bible to distinction, it certainly cannot be said to surpass, for nobility of ideals and conceptions, the religious philosophy of Plato or of the Greek and Roman Stoics. As history, while certain of the sections in the Yahvist strains of the Pentateuch represent perhaps the earliest extant examples of true historical narrative, it must be admitted that the best biblical history falls far short of the achievements in historical writing executed by the great historians of Greece and Rome. As philosophy, the Bible can produce nothing at all approaching the profundity and grandeur of the philosophy of Plato, Aristotle and the Epicureans. As science, the Bible ranks as mere nursery tales and a child's wonder-book compared to the achievements of Aristotle, to say nothing of the much more impressive scientific works of Hellenistic scientists like Archimedes and Hipparchus. As ethical doctrine, not even here excepting the teachings of Jesus, the Bible can produce nothing which in any way matches for thoroughness and logic the ethical writings of Plato and Aristotle. As poetry, the best poetic books of the Bible do not approach in any sense the philosophical epic of Lucretius or the lyrics of Catullus and Horace. Therefore, when we calmly examine the qualities of the Bible in secular perspective, we see that the argument for its preëminence fades away completely.

There are many who are willing to concede that the

Bible is in no sense a divinely inspired book, and further that as historical, philosophical, and scientific material it falls far short of the best secular products of its age, but they insist that as *literature* the Bible is supreme among human products. They contend, therefore, that its literary qualities justify its retention and systematic study. This attitude is, however, no more defensible than the orthodox notion of the divine dictation of Holy Scripture. What such people mean is that the language of the King James Version of the Bible represents an unusually pure example of classic English prose. This has nothing whatever to do with the literary style in which the Bible was originally composed. There is not the slightest relationship between the actual style of the authors of the original Hebrew and Greek texts of the Bible and the style of the rendition into English in the King James Version. To recommend the Bible as literature means nothing more than to recommend the literary style and creations of this age of English literature. This being the case, we would be wiser to insist upon extensive reading of the essays of Francis Bacon and the other great stylists of the late sixteenth and early seventeeth centuries in England. In such writers we find not only much greater scope for style and expression than was possible for the translators of the Bible in 1611, but also infinitely more valuable and edifying subject-matter. Few open-minded persons would contend for a moment that any book in the Bible possesses as much relevance and significance for the modern reader as, let us say, Francis Bacon's *Advancement of Learning*.

In spite of this we are prepared to admit that the Bible remains the most important book in the religious history of western Christendom. This it is, not because of its intrinsic qualities, but on account of its historic rôle in conditioning the development of religion and conduct through-

out the progress of western civilization. In other words, the conceded priority of the Bible among the religious books which have been produced by man during the course of western civilization is a primacy which rests upon historical rather than upon doctrinal grounds. Even here it must be remembered, as we pointed out above, that the non-canonical books of the Jews and Christians are frequently more significant for the explanation and interpretation of Judaism and Christianity than the Bible itself. The only reason why one can put the Bible first among the religious books of western society, even on a historic basis of judgment, is that the Bible has come to us as a single brief book readily available to the general reader, whereas the apocryphal and apocalyptic writings of the Old and New Testaments and the works of the Christian fathers and subsequent theologians constitute an enormous mass of miscellaneous and partially inaccessible literature which cannot be examined with convenience by the average reader. Some sceptics might object to the writer's contention that the Bible is more important than certain readily available books selected from this non-canonical literature. The writer is willing to concede that there is no little ground for contending that Augustine's *City of God* would give one more insight into Catholic Christianity, and Calvin's *Institutes of the Christian Religion* a better understanding of Protestantism, than the entire Bible. The writer is, however, inclined to defend the position that, when viewed from a secular and historical point of view, the Bible possesses more significance for western civilization than any other single religious treatise which has been brought within two covers.

IV. THE BIBLE AND MODERN LIFE

This conceded historical primacy of the Bible does not, of course, carry with it the implication that we should take the Bible at all seriously as a guide for life in the twentieth century. Once we view it as a secular human product, tracing incompletely the religious and cultural evolution of the Jews and early Christians, it follows that there is not the slightest reason for accepting anything in the Bible which does not square with modern knowledge, though it is equally true that there is no reason why we should reject sound wisdom merely because we find it in the Bible. The whole basis for judging the validity and relevance of biblical doctrines should be their conformity to the best knowledge which is today available in dealing with our diversified human problems in the twentieth century.

The validity of biblical doctrines for contemporary civilization can be well illustrated by a brief consideration of the Ten Commandments and their relevance for contemporary society. In the first place, the secular attitude toward the Bible makes it clear that the Ten Commandments are in no sense a divine revelation but are a by-product of the folkways and mores of the ancient Hebrews. Therefore they can be no better than the peoples and times which produced them. Instead of embodying divine wisdom and dictates they can impress us only as a reflection of the development of fairly high ethical notions in the eighth and seventh centuries (B.C.) of Jewish history. Judged solely on a secular basis they cannot be said to give evidence of any unique degree of moral development. They can be duplicated elsewhere in the legal and moral codes of oriental peoples. Their excellence can be judged

fairly and sensibly only in their relationship to the times and conditions during which they were enunciated.

We know, of course, that the Ten Commandments were not in any sense revealed by God to Moses. They were formulated in the eighth and seventh centuries before Christ, and they were assigned to a date as early as that of Moses primarily to give them greater prestige. Indeed, they are not even announced in the Old Testament as "The Ten Commandments." As Professor Conrad H. Moehlman has well pointed out in his excellent book, *The Story of the Ten Commandments*, the modern pious Christian interpretation of the Ten Commandments does not render a single one of the commandments in its original significance and implications:[5]

> At first addressed to adult male Hebrews, the ten commandments were later applied to women and minors as well. The mono-Yahwism of the first commandment was transformed into monotheism. Only late in their history did the Hebrews conquer idolatry, while Christianity compromised with it and for centuries suppressed the second commandment. The criticism of the man who used the magic name "Yahweh" while omitting the required sacrifice became proscription of the incommunicable name and the right use of the divine name in solemn affirmations. A monthly feast day became a seventh-day sabbath. Much later the first day was identified with the seventh day, and the strange and contradictory "Christian Sabbath" arose. The absolutism of the Hebrew father through the weathering of over two millennia became the recognition of the rights of the modern child. Ancient solidarity was turned into justice, then into an emphasis upon the infinite value of human personality, and finally into the corresponding significance of the group and the individual. Woman, the property of her husband, whose property rights the seventh commandment originally protected, very slowly arose to equality with her mate. Community of property and stewardship have wrestled with private property and complete ownership

[5] Moehlman, *op. cit.*, p. 289.

throughout Hebrew and Christian history. External and literal truthfulness has made progress toward genuineness and an emphasis upon inward disposition. The prohibition of appropriation of property in the absence of its owner advanced to condemnation of evil desire and approval of the *status quo*. It would be difficult to match this romance of the ten commandments.

Further, there are marked differences in the Ten Commandments as they are expounded to Jews, Catholics and Protestants. Professor Moehlman has presented an illuminating discussion of this striking and little-realized fact in the first five chapters of his *Story of the Ten Commandments*.

In order to judge of the validity of the Ten Commandments in the light of modern knowledge and as applied to contemporary conditions, one would have to examine the commandments individually. When we do so we find that the first four commandments are both irrelevant and anachronistic. They have no intelligibility whatever in the light of the modern secular outlook. The fifth commandment, relative to honoring one's father and mother, would need to be interpreted and applied in the light of modern child psychology. It certainly could not be accepted today in terms of the ancient patriarchal Jewish attitude in which it was conceived. The discussion of the subject in the *Mental Hygiene Bulletin* for June, 1929, is worth a score of such commandments. We may concede the validity of the sixth commandment, to the effect that we shall not commit murder, but it would be necessary to interpret this prohibition of homicide precisely and in detail before it would be of much value as a social guide today. Any one would probably concede that it forbids a man deliberately to murder his neighbor in cold blood with a shot-gun, but we should need an authoritative in-

terpretation as to whether it means that we should not murder natives in the process of modern imperialistic expansion, conduct wholesale murder in the form of modern wars, apply capital punishment, cause many unnecessary deaths through failing to apply ordinary safety devices in mines and factories, shoot down violators of the Jones Act, or bring about the death of many estimable citizens through the sale of poisoned liquor. The seventh commandment, which forbids adultery, might be accepted as sound in general practice, but one can conceive of many conditions in which adultery would not only be permissible but even commendable. Indeed, adultery would seem frequently to be socially indispensable in certain areas like South Carolina, where there exists no legal ground for divorce. In other words, a sociological rather than a pietistic test would need to be applied to the issue of adultery.

The eighth commandment, to the effect that "thou shalt not steal," is readily accepted as a taboo against filching a loaf of bread, but we are not so willing to accept it as restraint upon stealing a railroad or the natural resources of a country. The ninth commandment, forbidding perjury, is heartily commended by all if the perjury is committed against a respectable person or cause, but perjury becomes magnified into a public service of the first order, when committed to the detriment of a Sacco and Vanzetti or a Mooney and Billings. Finally, in regard to the tenth commandment, if we were to apply it in terms of modern conditions it would completely destroy the very foundations of modern business enterprise. Our present economic order, based as it is upon the profit motive and pecuniary standards, is nothing more or less than glorified and collective covetousness and envy. Even if we no longer are likely to covet our neighbor's ox or

ass, we are likely to covet his Rolls-Royce car. Further, it is interesting to note that those who are most exuberant and insistent about observing the Ten Commandments rarely have in mind the Ten Commandments as a whole, but rather concentrate, consciously or not, upon one or a few of the commandments which they personally have little temptation to break. It is, perhaps, worthy of passing comment that those who break the tenth commandment regarding covetousness with the greatest frequency and nonchalance are usually the same persons who are most insistent that others shall not violate the seventh commandment with respect to adultery.

Even if one were to concede that the Ten Commandments were wise and adequate as the cornerstone of the moral code of the ancient Hebrews living in a crude pastoral and agricultural economy, it is obvious that we should need many more than ten commandments to serve as the outline of social ethics in our complex, urban and industrial civilization of the twentieth century. If we were to limit ourselves to ten basic commands, however, we could certainly choose ten commandments far more valid and relevant than the ancient Hebrew decalogue. Professor Moehlman has suggested such a modern substitute for the ancient Hebrew code. While all might not believe that he has made the very best possible selection, yet it is difficult to see how any reasonable person could doubt that his substitute, which we reproduce below, is a tremendous improvement upon the original Ten Commandments:[6]

I. Thou shalt understand the factors of progress to be "a changing environment, a modifiable self, a reproductive process, and a conflict of forces resulting in selection of stable organizations and disintegration of unstable ones."

[6] Moehlman, *op. cit.*, pp. 298-99.

II. Thou shalt understand the fundamental wills operating in human life to be the will to live, the will to power, and the will to love.

III. Thou shalt recognize all disintegrating and destroying forces of life as sin.

IV. Thou shalt have faith in love and the interdependence of life as the constructive forces in the history of humanity.

V. Thou shalt have faith in a friendly God and universe.

VI. Thou shalt cultivate respect for thyself.

VII. Thou shalt serve the common good.

VIII. Thou shalt save the child from unjust exploitation.

IX. Thou shalt work toward the elimination of racial discrimination.

X. Thou shalt help maintain the social, industrial, national, and international peace of the world.

The same general principles which we have employed in dealing with the validity of the Ten Commandments would also have to be applied to the teachings of Jesus, including even the Beatitudes, but, as we shall devote a special chapter to the issue of Jesus in the light of modern knowledge, we shall not go into this subject in the present connection.

We might perhaps judiciously conclude this chapter by calling attention to certain frequent illogicalities on the part of others than the orthodox in approaching the problem of the Bible and Sacred Scriptures. Indeed, the orthodox are by all odds the most logical of religionists in their attitude toward, and utilization of, Holy Writ. There are a certain group of Modernists who completely reject the Biblical God and yet retain reverent respect for God's word. Another group reject any such conception as that of the divine inspiration and sanctity of the Bible but cling to the conception of God which we owe to the Bible. It ought to be apparent to any logically-minded individual that God and God's word are an indivisible

couplet which cannot well be separated, though of course we recognize that it is possible to believe in a God who is in no sense related to the anthropomorphic God of the Bible. What we are maintaining is that it is illogical to reject the God of the Bible and retain the conventional attitude toward the Bible, and equally indefensible to accept the God of the Bible and reject His word as embodied in Holy Scriptures. There are only two possible alternatives compatible with elementary logic. We can reject both the Bible and the biblical God, or we may accept them both. While both solutions accord with logic, it is obvious that only the former can be squared with scholarship.

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Chapter V

THE FAITH OF OUR FATHERS LIVING STILL

We believe that the Bible is as unerringly accurate in every statement that touches upon what we call science, in such realms as geology, or astronomy, or human or animal origins, as it is in the realm of spiritual truth and the way of salvation for lost men.

(Charles Gallaudet Trumbull)

I. THE ORTHODOX VIEW OF NATURE, GOD, MAN AND LIFE

We shall in this chapter endeavor to summarize the essentials of the attitude toward the physical universe, God, man and the good life held by the great majority of religious persons, not only during preceding centuries, but even in twentieth century America. While an advanced minority have abandoned most of these conceptions, certainly the vast mass of active communicants still hold tenaciously to the point of view and conceptions which we shall here all too briefly summarize. Even many of those who have abandoned literal belief in the tenets of orthodoxy conduct their life as though they still adhered to orthodox convictions and they go on attempting to adapt the old orthodox categories to the nomenclature of modern knowledge.

We may start our summary of the essentials of orthodoxy by a brief account of the cosmology defended by the faithful. The orthodox uphold the view that our universe and all therein was a product of a special and

cataclysmic creation which took place some six thousand years ago. Experts in orthodox chronology have computed that the actual date of this great creative week was Sunday, October 23d to Saturday, October 29th, 4,004 B.C. It is believed by the traditionalists that God actually created the physical universe and all of its inhabitants during the working hours of a single week of seven days. There is no uniformity of belief as to the precise nature of the creative endeavor, as there are two distinct descriptions of creation in Genesis. These accounts diverge on fundamentals. This is due to the fact that one version is drawn from the "J" source of the Pentateuch and the other from the "E" source and were combined very awkwardly by a later editor. These two accounts differ radically as to what God achieved on each of the creative days and particularly diverge in regard to the creation of man and woman. In the account drawn from the "E" source God is represented as having created both man and woman on the sixth day as the crowning work of creation. In the account embodied in the "J" source it is stated that God created man alone and then tried to induce him to choose a wife from among the female animals, thus indicating both divine ignorance of the principles of genetics and a certain divine obtuseness in regard to sexual æsthetics. In this case, however, man's taste was remarkably superior to that of God and he refused to be satisfied with any of the female members of the animal kingdom. Thereupon God created a human mate, fashioned from one of the ribs of the primordial man. Since modern science has demonstrated the enormous period of time which must have elapsed even in earth history, some of the orthodox have attempted to reinterpret the six days of creation as meaning 6,000 years. They justify this on the basis of the scriptural text which

states that a thousand years is but a day in the sight of the Lord. This ingenious exegesis has not, however, made any great headway with the faithful. Quite logically they have regarded the authoritative scriptural estimate of six days as entirely convincing. Further, it was not difficult to see that a period of 6,000 years was not much closer to the enormous estimates of the astronomers and geologists as to evolutionary time than the six literal days of the scriptures.

The precision and assurance of the orthodox in regard to the date and time of creation are thoroughly matched by their conviction as to the location of the creative act. Within the last year a rich citizen of our country offered to contribute a large sum of money to fit out an expedition to discover the actual geographical location of the Garden of Eden. The traditional Garden of Eden was as unique and wonderful as the achievements of the creative week. Mr. Joseph Wheless has thus summarized some of these curious and impressive features of the traditional Eden:[1]

> The Garden of Eden had some topographic and hydrographic features truly notable. Of so limited an area that a single man was sufficient "to dress and to keep it" (Gen. ii, 15), it yet contained every created species of fauna and of flora; and all this exuberant growth without water, "for Yahveh Elohim had not caused it to rain upon the earth; but there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground" (Gen. ii, 5, 6). So wondrously copious was this mist that its superfluity created a vast prehistoric river, which "went out of Eden to water the garden"—and so it would seem that the garden was somewhere outside of Eden. So vast was this Father of Waters that, after watering the garden, "from thence it was parted, and came into four heads" (ii, 10). One branch, the Pison, "compasseth the whole

[1] Wheless, *Is It God's Word?*, p. 52.

land of Havilah" (ii, 11), wherever that was; the second, Gihon, "compasseth the whole land of Ethiopia" (ii, 13), which we know to be a vast country in equatorial Africa; the third river was the Hiddekel, "which goeth towards the east of Assyria" (ii, 14), and is supposed to be the Tigris, which however is west of Assyria; "and the fourth river is Euphrates" (ii, 14). These last two rivers are thousands of miles from Ethiopia, but all are a notable tribute to the copiousness of that watery mist of Eden.

The creation hypothesis not only rested upon the assumption of the recency and brevity of the creative period but also upon the conviction of the uniqueness and finality of the original creation. There was little or no conception of growth and development. It was taken for granted that there had been nothing but a great chaotic void before the week of creation and that there had been no marked change in man and his surrounding flora and fauna since God rested from his impressive endeavors on that first glorious Saturday of divine contemplation, contentment and relaxation. There was a very definite feeling of finality, exactness and certainty with respect to how everything had come about. Geology, botany, zoölogy and anthropology were static and conventional bodies of descriptive knowledge, auxiliary to theology and portraying the wonders which God had wrought once and for all somewhere in the salubrious climate of western Asia some six millenniums ago.

The special creation hypothesis brought about a very narrowly circumscribed geocentric outlook on the cosmos. In the accepted story of creation our earth was presented as not only the center of the universe but also the only vitally important object in the cosmic realm. The heavenly bodies were looked upon as relatively insignificant, not so very distant from the earth and designed to promote in differing degrees and by diverse methods the edification

and welfare of mankind. The biblical picture of the universe was literally that of a small, flat earth surrounded by the solid inverted blue bowl of the firmament. The stars were believed to be either set in the inner surface of this firmament or suspended from it. The early Christians, many of whom were, before their conversion, pagan scholars and philosophers, tended to abandon the literal biblical view of the cosmos and to accept the Greek version of cosmic mechanics. According to this, the earth occupied the center of the universe and around it turned a number of firm transparent spheres. On the surface of each of the spheres was fixed one of the planets or some of the more important stars. Some of these spheres were believed to turn clockwise and others counter-clockwise. Some turned very rapidly and others slowly. In this way the pagans attempted to explain the change of the relative position of the heavenly bodies during the year.

The medieval Christians accepted this pagan view of the physical universe, but subjected it to significant theological elaboration. With the pagans the heavens had possessed little or no significance in relation to the future life. The Christians, however, had taken over the Persian notions of heaven and hell, and therefore they converted the spaces between these transparent spheres into the heavenly abode of different grades of the saved. Dante presented the classic medieval conception of the heavens. The first heaven, that between the sphere of the moon and the sphere of Mercury was the heavenly abode of the inconstant saints; the second heaven, between the spheres of Mercury and Venus, was the heaven of the lawyers; the third heaven, between the spheres of Venus and the sun, was the celestial abode of the saved lovers; the fourth heaven, between the sphere of the sun and Mars, was assigned to the theologians; the fifth heaven, between the

sphere of Mars and that of Jupiter, was handed over to the Crusaders; the sixth heaven, between the sphere of Jupiter and Saturn, was that inhabited by the righteous kings; while the seventh heaven, that between the sphere of Saturn and the realm of the fixed stars was the heavenly dwelling-place of the mystics. In the remote empyrean paradise beyond the fixed stars dwelt the Trinity and the special order of saved saints.

The Copernican astronomical revolution consisted in interchanging the position of the earth and the sun in this cosmo-theological scheme, but Copernicus retained the doctrine of the firm starry spheres. The discoveries of his successors, such as Galileo, Kepler and Newton, overthrew this crude cosmology and established the fact that the heavenly bodies moved freely in space, traveling about the sun in eliptical orbits and held in their paths by the law of universal gravitation. While even orthodox Christians have formally accepted the Newtonian scheme of the cosmos, they have never actually readjusted their theological thinking to the implications of a heliocentric universe, to say nothing of our more recent views of the cosmos which make our entire solar system seem but an insignificant unit in a universe of universes. The whole Christian Epic is intelligible only in terms of geocentric premises. Indeed, in Zion City Mr. Voliva logically insists that the literal biblical cosmology shall be taught in the schools.

The assumptions and implications of the geocentric psychosis were both astronomical and theological in character. From an astronomical point of view, the geocentric outlook made it impossible for man to realize in any sense the magnitude, complexity and dynamic nature of the cosmic system which today staggers the imagination of

even the well-read amateur in the field of astro-physics. Theologically speaking, this geocentric view of things made it quite reasonable to suppose that the earth was both the most notable product of God's creative ingenuity and also the all-absorbing center of divine solicitude. It did not seem in any sense incredible that God could from time to time have resided in person upon our planet and held conversation with human beings. It did not appear at all improbable or illogical that God could have been so much concerned about the welfare of the human inhabitants of this planet as to be willing to sacrifice His "only begotten Son" for the purpose of bringing about their salvation.

The explanation of creation which colored the cosmology of the faithful was that cosmic dualism that the later Jews and Christians had taken over from the Persian religion. We have already pointed out that, according to this view, the purpose of God in creating the material universe was to provide a convenient arena in which the principles of good and evil could have at each other and carry on the conflict to the bitter end. Ultimately, good would triumph over evil; the faithful would be rewarded by an eternal life of incredible bliss; and the wicked would be miserably tortured in everlasting fire. This crude rationalization of the puzzle of creation and existence has constituted the only widely accepted interpretation of the purpose of God in creating the material universe. Its complete demolition by modern natural science, critical thought and cultural history has been one of the most revolutionary aspects of the great reconstructions so characteristic of twentieth century culture. Yet the orthodox remain almost entirely oblivious of this intellectual revolution.

Along with a geocentric interpretation of the physical universe the orthodox maintain a crude and literal anthromorphic view of God. Accepting quite literally the biblical statement to the effect that God created man in His image, the faithful visualize God as a sort of glorified man, magnificent in proportions and venerable in aspect. It is assumed that God not only resembles man in his corporeal layout, but also manifests essentially the same intellectual processes and emotional responses as man. The orthodox, of course, assume that divine wisdom vastly exceeds the wisdom of man, but they hold that the difference between the mental processes of God and of man is one of degree rather than of kind. A typical orthodox conception of God and man's relation to him is described with critical and illuminating comment by Heywood Broun in the New York *Telegram* for July 10, 1929:

Preaching in the pulpit of his father, the Rev. Hillyer Hawthorne Straton advised the members of his congregation to "make a chum of God."

"It is not possible for most of us," he said, "to sit down and talk with the President, the latest winner of the Nobel Prize, great authors or industrial giants. However, each one of us is given the opportunity to talk with the Maker of the Universe, to speak with the Creator of all wisdom, to have fellowship with God Himself—to make a chum of God."

To me the young preacher struck an appealing note with these words, but if his theology is in any measure like that of his father no Straton follower can possibly begin to accept the advice. It is not unreasonable to assume that Hillyer accepts the creed of John Roach Straton, since at the moment he is serving as assistant in Calvary Baptist Church.

Now, the God of the Stratons has frequently been pictured by them as a Creator not only willing but even eager to cast men, women and children into a hell of everlasting fire. Dr. Straton has been at some pains to explain that in speaking of "fire" he meant a literal place of brimstone tor-

ment. And the offenses punishable by eternal damnation have seemed at times a little trivial. Seemingly one of the mortal sins consists of speaking disrespectfully of John Roach Straton.

At any rate, I was myself recently consigned to the pit along with Don Marquis and Sinclair Lewis by the good clergyman. Condemnation came after a sort of court-martial, in which not one of us was permitted to testify in his own defense. Undoubtedly the three of us cast into darkness by the kindly doctor have various blemishes upon our consciences, but our only common failing is a dislike for John Roach Straton.

Accordingly, it is not possible for me to heed the advice of young Hillyer. Indeed, if close communion with God may be attained only by reverencing the Stratons I prefer to follow the counsel of Professor Rogers and become a snob. Nor does it seem to me that it should be feasible for any one to make a chum of God if the Creator were truly the irritable and vengeful Deity worshipped in Calvary Baptist Church. These Baptist evangelists would have us believe that practically all the pleasures known on earth are offenses in the eyes of their Maker of the universe.

As nearly as I can make out, the God of Calvary Church is very like Dr. Straton, though half a head taller and somewhat more hasty in his judgments. Under the circumstances it is a fellowship which many of us must respectfully decline.

This notion of God, which has been retained by the Christians down to our own day, was but one of the several conceptions of God which emerged in the Bible. It is neither the most crude nor the most advanced of the biblical interpretations of the Deity. The impurity-complex of the Christians has prevented their accepting the most rudimentary biblical notion of God, which was that of a crude phallic deity. At the same time, Christianity has never thoroughly appropriated either Amos' notion of God as the source of social justice or the view of God as divine love which is traditionally associated, whether

rightly or wrongly, with Jesus. The conception of God which the Christians have most usually adopted and persistently retained is the Old Testament notion of God as a glorified patriarch serving as the cruel and revengeful tribal deity of the nomadic Hebrews. The Christians can scarcely be blamed for having selected this conception of the Deity, as it is certainly the one which emerges from the passages of not only the Old but the New Testament as the composite picture of God. Perhaps the best summary statement of this typical biblical view of God, which has remained the characteristic Christian interpretation, is that set forth in Mark Twain's *Mysterious Stranger:*

> A God who could make good children as easily as bad, yet preferred to make bad ones; who could have made every one of them happy, yet never made a single happy one; who made them prize their bitter life, yet stingily cut it short; who gave His angels eternal happiness unearned, yet required His other children to earn it; who gave His angels painless lives, yet cursed His other children with biting miseries and maladies of mind and body; who mouths justice and invented hell; who mouths mercy—and invented hell; who mouths morals to other people and has none Himself; who frowns upon crimes, yet commits them all; who created man without invitation, then tried to shuffle the responsibility of man's acts upon man, instead of honorably placing it where it belonged, upon Himself; and, finally, with altogether divine obtuseness, invites this poor, abused slave to worship Him.

As an actual matter of fact, God was never conceived of as a gentleman until the time of Montaigne and the Third Earl of Shaftesbury. The latter is usually given the credit of being the first to envisage God in terms of a cultured gentleman and to conceive that such a formulation was the least which we could concede to the Deity.

In his activities, while God is formally assumed to be

responsible for all the manifestations and operations of physical nature, yet in actual practice the Christians tend to associate divine activity and presence primarily with unusual, if not quite terrible and awe-inspiring, occurrences. God is looked upon as functioning most clearly and certainly in the case of earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, tidal waves and other similar cataclysms. It is this phase of the Christian interpretation of God which led the great historian of Christian theology, Adolf Harnack, to describe the Christian God as "the God of arbitrariness." In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, as a result of the reaction of the Newtonian science on theology, the Deists and other liberal religious thinkers tended to identify God with nature and to represent the orderly processes of nature as the outgrowth of divine law. This reconstruction of the conception of God has been very generally adopted by contemporary Modernists, but it has received no wide acceptance by the orthodox. Even in law we still retain the conventional view of the cruel and arbitrary deity in the notion of the "act of God," namely, an unpredictable emergency or catastrophe.

The received view of the nature of man, which forms an integral part of the accepted Christian Epic, presents that amazing logical inconsistency so characteristic of much theological reasoning. Man is held to be at once the "Lord of all Creation" and a "vile worm of the dust." Only "a little lower than the angels," he is at the same time so base that he can do no good thing on his own account and may expect salvation only through the indwelling grace of God.

The most important point, of course, is that man is viewed from a theological standpoint rather than from the vantage-point of biology, physiology, psychology and sociology. The key to his behavior is sought in the traits

assigned to him in Holy Writ, in conformity with the will of God, and not in the nature of his biological structure, his glandular orchestration, his social conditioning or his institutional surroundings. Theology, rather than biology, physiology, anthropology and psychology, are believed to provide the proper illumination with respect to the nature of man. Above all, man is not admitted to be a member of the animal kingdom, but is looked upon as separated from it very sharply in every aspect of his nature and his every legitimate desire. Comparative biology, psychology and anthropology, based on the comparison of man with other animals, is foreign to the whole outlook of the orthodox. Indeed, the most potent source of adamant resistance to the evolutionary hypothesis is the revulsion of feeling against the hypothetically abhorrent suggestion that man is simply the dominant animal on this particular planet in the present geological age.

The orthodox notions of the purpose of life and of the nature of the good life flow naturally out of the accepted cosmology and its attendant theology. Life here on this earth is not looked upon as of any consequence in itself. It is significant only in so far as our earthly conduct affects our eternal destinies. The function of man is not in any sense to make himself as happy and efficient as possible here on earth in the light of his physiological equipment and his social and cultural surroundings. The supreme, indeed almost the sole, objective of human life is to insure the salvation of a mysterious entity known as the human soul in that spiritual home which is alleged to be in store for those who conduct themselves according to the prescribed behavior approved in Holy Writ. Spiritual salvation, then, rather than human happiness and efficiency, is looked upon as the real purpose for which man has been placed upon this planet. Earthly

happiness is, in fact, regarded as fundamentally antagonistic to eternal salvation. The mundanely happy man is likely to be absorbed in, and content with, the things of "the world, the flesh, and the Devil" and, hence, either careless or contemptuous of those spiritual values whose quest alone can lead the humble and miserable sinner safely into eternity.

It will be readily apparent that, with this background of cosmology, anthropology and theology, the approved source of guidance for human life is not to be discovered in the sciences of nature and of man or in æsthetics, but rather in the Hebrew Bible, a supposedly sacred book which reveals God's wishes and directions with respect to that life which merits divine approval and will achieve eternal salvation. It is unthinkable that one should assume to discover directions as to desirable behavior in a knowledge of the nature and requirements of man as an animal sharing a group life and a common cultural heritage with other animals like unto himself. In other words, nothing which man has discovered through centuries of painful investigation of human nature and social institutions can for a moment be compared as to authority or cogency with the divine dispensation embodied in the Bible. It is of no import as to how archaic these scriptural precepts may appear in the light of the most fundamental and the best established findings of contemporary science. A person who would suggest that the writings of Haeckel, Huxley, William James, John Dewey, Morris Cohen and Max Otto might legitimately be matched against those assigned to Moses or St. Paul would be regarded by the traditionally-minded in much the same light as the peasants of Tennessee look upon the estimable Mr. Darrow.

It is but natural that the accepted theory of human conduct should rest upon metaphysical and theological

rather than upon biological, psychological and sociological foundations. There is no appreciation whatever of the fact that human conduct is the resultant of a certain definite type of biological or neurological heredity, conditioned by a vast variety of social stimuli playing upon the individual in the whole period which elapses between birth and death.

The almost universally adopted conception of behavior is that of man as a free moral agent. It is held that man is perfectly capable of choosing any type of behavior, irrespective of the peculiar circumstances of his biological background and his social environment. Entirely independent of his ancestry and training, it is held that any person is at any time perfectly free to decide, for example, as to whether on a Sunday night he will enter a church with an air of piety and penitence or remain outside and cast stones at the structure in derision. Human behavior is regarded as the ever-varying and somewhat unpredictable outcome of the perpetual struggle between the human conscience, which is the custodian of God's will in the bosom of the individual, and the subtle temptations of the Devil. The conscience tells man what he ought to do; the Devil, what he wants to do. The individual is free, however, to follow his conscience and to repel the subtle seductions of the Devil.

II. LEADING CULTURAL FOSSILS IN ORTHODOXY

We have now summarized some leading essentials in the religious and cultural complex of orthodox Christianity. We shall now describe briefly some of the conspicuous fossils most characteristic of, and essential to, orthodox belief. Among these we may select for special comment such matters as the (1) soul; (2) the belief in a literal immortality; (3) the belief in heaven and hell as actual places in which the future life of man will be spent; (4)

the conception of sin and the conviction of original sin; (5) the belief in a spirit world as distinct from, and lying behind, the physical world of everyday experience; (6) the conception of prayer as a technique for modifying and controlling the will and activities of God and the conduct of others; and (7) the conception of sanctity and sacred things. While there are a great many other important points in the complex of orthodoxy, these are unquestionably the most vital and essential tenets of conventional religion.

By the soul the orthodox means some mysterious special entity which gives life to the human body and survives after the death of the body, at which time the soul separates itself from its previous temporary bodily dwelling-place. The soul is peculiarly the gift of God and it is through the soul that God maintains His active contact with human beings. The *Century Dictionary*, in its latest edition, defines the soul as "the principle of life, feeling, thought and action in man, regarded as a distinct entity separate from the body, and commonly held to be separable in existence from the body; the spiritual part of man as distinct from the physical." The Christians have never given much attention, outside the circle of esoteric theological discussion, to the origin of the soul of each individual human being, though it is implied that God creates a fresh and separate soul wherewith to endow each individual, either in embryo or at some time after birth. The Christians have never in any large group accepted the belief in reïncarnation. A separate soul is somehow mysteriously provided for every human being and it remains eternally with each individual as the core of his personality, surviving after the physical death to be rendered happy in heaven or unspeakably punished in hell.

It goes without saying that it is the soul which gives each of us our peculiar and unique personal traits. Otherwise our personality could not survive after death. The modern psychological conception of personality is one that regards it as the collective result of the responses of our neurological equipment to the conditioning effect of our experiences. It is obvious that this view of personality precludes the possibility of the continued existence of the personality after the physico-chemical capacity to respond to stimulation has ceased when death intervenes as a physical fact. According to the Christian view, the soul not only provides us with our personality but carries it over intact into the spiritual world of the hereafter, entirely independent of the previous brain and nervous system of the individual which ceases to function at death.

The belief in the soul as the dynamic and essential quality of life and personality leads directly to the Christian view of the immortality of the soul. The notion of a future life antedates, of course, the religious thought of the Jews and Christians. In a crude form it appears among primitive peoples, and it was well developed among the Egyptians at least a millenium before the date traditionally assigned to Moses. As we have already pointed out, the belief in immortality possessed relatively little vividness and significance until the Persian doctrines came to be adopted by the pagans, Jews and Christians. The Jewish *Sheol* and the pagan *Hades* were portrayed as involving a sort of monotonous, indifferent existence. The essential thing was to be buried with the proper ritual, in order that the deceased and his relatives might escape the inconveniences attendant upon the erratic and embarrassing behavior of a disembodied ghost. The Persian notion of an eternally pleasant heaven and of endless

punishment in hell made the conception of immortality infinitely more significant than it has been in the religious thought of any other people. The Christian version of immortality and of heaven and hell are, as we have already made clear, nothing more or less than these Persian conceptions which came over into Christian beliefs.

The orthodox Christian believes that the individual survives after death with a completely intact personality, even though entirely devoid of his original bodily equipment. This will enable him to recognize his earthly friends and relatives, if he happens to stumble across them in either heaven or hell and will, of course, make the individual likewise readily distinguishable and recognizable by such of his friends as chance to meet him in the hereafter. It is commonly assumed by many of the orthodox that families will be united in heaven and segregated in separate sections in the heavenly city. It is generally assumed by the orthodox that the personality which survives after death is a disembodied spirit, specifically the soul which left the body at death. Yet certain aspects of the orthodox conception of heaven are such as to imply a corporeal future existence. Not only is it difficult to conceive of the mental activity implied in immortality without a physical basis, but the singing of hosannas and the strumming of harps represent types of activity difficult of execution by a purely ethereal entity. Of course, some of the orthodox actually believe in a literal bodily resurrection, though they are hard put to it to explain how this can be possible in the light of the well-known fact of disintegration after death. At any rate, whatever the diversities of belief in detail as to the nature of immortality and whatever the difficulties in the way of

specific interpretations of life in eternity, all orthodox Christians believe very literally in personal immortality following death.

The belief in immortality involves, of course, specific conceptions as to the nature and location of heaven and hell. To the orthodox these are not states of mind or conditions which befall people here upon earth, but the specific residence to which all must repair after death and the day of judgment. They are quite literal places. Heaven is the abode of the saved and hell the torture-room of the damned. The descriptions of heaven and hell in the Bible are few and meager, the chief source being the Revelation of St. John. The most elaborate discussions of the location and of the nature of heaven and hell are to be found in the writings of the great Church fathers and the medieval theologians, though many Protestant divines like Jonathan Edwards have been much interested in this subject and have offered elaborate descriptions of the future abode of the soul. There has been decisively more interest in portraying the horrors of hell than in setting forth the attractions of heaven. The account of heaven which we find in the Book of Revelation reminds one of an oriental fairy tale regarding the legendary cities of gold and precious stones. The whole conception is distinctly anthropomorphic and portrays a very specific material abode for the saved, the dimensions and seating capacity of which have been the subject of much curious and ingenious exegesis by devout preachers and laymen alike. Hell is conventionally described in the Scriptures as "the lake of fire and brimstone," but it remained for later commentators to picture in detail the horrors of this area. The remarkable capacity of the human mind for savage imagination has never been so well illustrated as in the medieval and early Protestant descriptions of

hell and the tortures reputed to go on therein. As to the specific location of heaven and hell there is no common agreement among Christians. The medieval Catholic conception of heaven was best summarized in Dante's *Divine Comedy,* a brief description of which we have already given. In Dante's scheme there were a number of heavens, to say nothing of the supreme and distant empyrean Paradise and of purgatory, the latter of which was a sort of intermediate area between hell and heaven. According to Dante, hell was a great conical pit located in the center of the earth beneath Jerusalem. The earth which sank in to form the pit of hell pushed out an equal amount of ground on the opposite side of our planet to constitute the Mount of Purgatory. The Protestants have been somewhat less precise and complicated in their discussion of the location of heaven and hell, generally assuming that heaven lies somewhere above the apparent blue dome of the sky and hell somewhere beneath the surface of the earth. While there may be a number of important differences of opinion in regard to the specific location and nature of heaven and hell as among the orthodox Christians, the important basic fact remains that all types of the orthodox agree that there is a specific abode to which the immortal soul will retire to spend an eternal existence after the brief span of earthly life has passed.

One of the most vital and important of the intellectual fossils embodied in orthodoxy is the conception of sin. Sin, in its most specific and technical implication, is a purely theological conception. It has no direct reference to conduct conceived of in earthly terms or from the standpoint of specific social values. It represents, as far as the individual is concerned, a deliberate and specific violation of the revealed will of God. It also may involve

rebellion against the divine scheme of things or refusal to accept the vicarious sacrifice of Jesus. In short, it represents manifestations of man's reaction to the supernatural world and has no reference to conduct viewed in secular perspective. Closely related to this general concept of sin is the notion of "original sin" which has played an important part in the theology of the Jews and Christians. According to this dogma, man originally appeared in the Garden of Eden a perfect and sinless being. Tempted by the serpent, however, he violated God's explicit command not to eat of the fruit of the tree of knowledge, and for this offense he was cast out of the Garden with an eternal curse upon the race. This divine curse upon all subsequent generations of men, owing to the sin of their original parents, is what the orthodox mean by original sin, to which all men are heir. It was to free men from this all-pervading burden of primitive guilt that God sent his Only Begotten Son to live among mankind and ultimately to perish miserably on the cross. A third aspect of the orthodox sin-complex is what is known as the "sense of sin." This is a feeling of inadequacy, unworthiness, guilt and the like, which appears particularly in the years following adolescence or in later regressions to adolescent states of mind which are produced by morbid obsession with one's supposed evil deeds. Of course, one might develop an individualized sense of sin through preoccupation with the notion of original sin, but what we technically mean by the sense of sin is this conception of inadequacy and unworthiness before God or the supernatural powers.

The notion of sin is probably the most potent weapon in the whole armory of orthodoxy. Without it there would be little rationale in the whole Christian scheme of things. It is the function of Christianity to redeem man from original sin, through conversion to free him of the sense

of sin, and through the rites of the church to eliminate the effects of sin and insure salvation in the world to come. It is through succumbing to sin and failing to secure redemption that the so-called sinner is bound ultimately to end up in hell. Once we wipe out the validity of the notion of sin there would appear to be slight justification for the ministrations and activities of the church. Therefore, we can understand the ferocity with which orthodox clergymen greet the ultra-modernist suggestion that sin is an anachronism and a confusing superstition.

Another vestige from cultural antiquity is the orthodox notion of the spirit world, or the realm and category of spiritual things. We explained in an earlier chapter how primitive man came to individualize the sources of supernatural power and to conceive of the residence of supernatural power in individual or personified spirits. This belief is what we know of as animism, and the modern orthodox view of things spiritual is only a slightly more sophisticated hang-over of primitive animism. The orthodox today continue to believe in spiritual entities and forces which exist apart from nature and its manifestations and are inscrutable by the methods of natural science. Indeed, the spiritual world is most frequently referred to by the orthodox through contrasting it with the material world of nature which furnishes the subject-matter for scientific investigation. Further, there is a common tendency on the part of the orthodox to refer to spiritual values as something which inherently exist, in contrast to those secular social values emerging out of the nature of man and his relationships with his fellow-men. These spiritual values represent states of mind and responses which develop in man as a result of his assumed relationship with supernatural powers. It goes without saying that the orthodox Christian regards the spirit world and spiritual

values as incomparably more important than the material world and the secular type of social values. Next to the emphasis upon sin, perhaps the chief rhetorical gesture of the orthodox is to reiterate the contrast between the noble spiritual world, changeless and permanent, and the relatively unimportant and ephemereal world of material nature. One of the most common epithets used by the orthodox to discredit the onslaughts of the scientific and sceptically-minded is the charge of materialism. At the apex of the spirit world we have, of course, the Holy Spirit, or the medium of the outpouring of God's power for the aid and edification of the faithful Christian.

An integral part of the orthodox complex is the conception of prayer as a method whereby the Christian may get into direct touch with God, reveal to the Almighty his innermost thoughts and aspirations, and provide reasonable expectancy of swaying the divine will in harmony with the needs and the requests of the supplicant. There is no doubt that prayer represents an attenuated contemporary manifestation of the ancient conceptions and expressions of magic. The dominant trait of magic as a phase of primitive religion was its supposed coercitive character, namely, its capacity to control the gods and secure desired results. Modern prayer implies a similar belief in the capacity of man to control and direct God's will and to modify the operation of divine wisdom. Otherwise, prayers to bless our public officials, to give us health and prosperity, to send rain or to avert cataclysms would present no rationality whatever. It is held that in prayer the good Christian may not only sway God and modify his own destiny, but may also definitely affect the actions of others, even though the latter may not be conscious of the prayers. Of course, not all prayer partakes of this quasi-coercitive character, but it cannot be denied that the great

majority of prayers uttered by orthodox Christian preachers have as their basic theme a request to grant something which, it is implied, God would not be likely to insure or concede without this prayerful entreaty. Many prayers may be regarded as more correctly a part of worship than a hang-over from early magic. Such prayers express our appreciation of the majesty and goodness of God, and the like. Whether prayers are primarily coercitive or worshipful, the one common and basic factor remains, namely, the belief that man may get into direct contact with God and induce God to lend him very directly for the time being the divine ear. Incidentally, it is implied that God is a person who may be addressed after the ordinary human fashion of conversation. There is some difference as between Catholic and Protestant theory in regard to the ease and directness with which the individual Christian believer may attain the ear of God. With the Catholics there is a much more elaborate provision for the mediation of the clergy between the ordinary layman and God Himself. It was one of the more basic and unique innovations of Protestantism to hold that the individual might pray to God with just as much effect as priestly supplication could be expected to produce. Any believer could literally "make a chum of God." The cultural implications, however, of priestly prayer and the direct supplication of the believer are essentially the same. They imply identical notions of God and of the basic mode of communication between God and man.

The intellectually depressing nature of the typical evangelical Protestant prayer service is well indicated by Mr. Herbert Asbury in his *Up From Methodism*. He presents in the passage quoted below an admirable illustration of the mental depression, apprehensiveness and bigotry generated by these prayerful rites. The writer can testify

from the memory of his own childhood experiences that Mr. Asbury has not exaggerated in this matter, but has shown admirable restraint and moderation:[2]

My uncle was an extraordinarily pious man, an official of our church and of our Sunday school, and a leader in every movement designed to entice the sinner from his wicked ways and lead him to the true religion of the Wesleyans. He was intent upon salvation for everyone, and let no opportunity pass to serve the Lord. He frowned upon laughter, and although he had a very charming family, there was little joy in his home; a laugh seemed to make him uncomfortable and start a train of dismal religious thought, and I gathered the impression that all mirth was a direct and studied affront to God.

Every night after dinner, or supper, as we called it then, his living room was given over to family prayer. I frequently spent the night with his youngest son, my chum for many years, and was compelled to attend with the others and absorb my nightly dose of religion, and listen to a solemn account of the fearful things that God would do to us if we strayed from the path of righteousness. There was no laughter, and there were no jokes; the whole atmosphere of the house turned gray and gloomily oppressive when my uncle rose from his seat, glanced sorrowfully at his family, and announced:

"We will now have prayers."

He turned and with bowed head passed into the living room. We sat at the supper table for a moment in silence, myself seeing goblins and fearsome avenging creatures of God leering at me from every shaded corner of the room, and my mind racing madly over the day's activities to discover what I had done that required an alibi. In a few moments my aunt arose and went slowly into the other room, and then one by one the others. We marched solemnly, with downcast eyes; we might have been going to a funeral. Indeed, it seems to me now that we must in truth have been going to a funeral; here was a fine house built for the warmth of human happiness, turned into a forbidding mausoleum by the mere mention of God.

In the living room Uncle awaited us, standing beside the

[2] Asbury, *op. cit.*, pp. 13 ff.

small table on which, always, there was nothing but the Family Bible. He waited in silence until we had taken our places, and then he laid reverent hands upon the Book and began fumbling with the pages, glancing sharply over his spectacles to make sure that everyone was undergoing some sort of emotional upheaval, and looking particularly for some sign of revolt from his son and myself. I doubt if he ever knew it, but when I attended family prayer in his house I did not think of revolt. I was in an agony of fright; I felt as if something was crushing me, and that something was my uncle's God, an avenging monster ready to devour me for my sins. God was in the house and I was afraid.

The most uncomfortable chairs in the house were used for family prayer, and we perched upon their edges, afraid to sink back and relax, because we had been told many times that discomfort and righteousness were well-nigh synonymous. God would have been scandalized and indignant had we made ourselves comfortable to listen to His Word. And then my uncle read from the Bible. He read without joy; he held in his hand the Book which in his eyes was the sole hope of humanity, the Book that contained the glad news that for all mankind there was salvation, but he read it as if it were a sentence of death, slowly and solemnly, dwelling with horrible clarity upon those phrases that promised punishment. The Bible seemed to have no effect upon him but to make him gloomy and miserable.

At the conclusion of his reading, he slowly closed the Bible and placed it upon the table. He then stood for a moment in profound thought, his chin resting upon his breast. I assumed that he was overcome by contemplation of the sins of a wicked world. Those of us who were young began about this time to itch with that devilish itch which invariably afflicts a youngster when there is a penalty for scratching. We itched and itched, but we were afraid to scratch because God was in the room, and we knew as well as we knew anything that He would punish us if we moved. And finally my uncle stared at the ceiling and said:

"Let us pray."

With almost the precision of automata we knelt by our chairs, our knees grinding into the hard carpet, while my

uncle's voice soared in a sonorous appeal to the Lord to give us some of this and some of that, to bless us and make us prosperous, and, in effect, to hell with such infidels as Jews, Catholics and Presbyterians. And then he rose slowly to his feet and passed from the room, without speaking. We followed, and scattered about our various affairs, but it was a long time before we could shake off the effects of the religious debauch and play with any zest. And nearly always I awoke some hours later in the throes of a nightmare, pursued by fiends and demons shrieking that I was to be boiled and fried and cooked in the fires of Hell.

Every night year after year this sort of thing went on in houses all over Farmington, and for that matter all over the United States. It would be interesting to know how many hours were wasted in the course of a year by such senseless appeals to the Heavenly Father.

The final element among the rubrics of orthodoxy with which we propose to deal is the conception of sanctity and the category of sacred things. Like the other manifestations of orthodoxy this is distinctly a notion which has come down from primitive times. Primitive man believed that many manifestations of life and nature and certain specific things were sacred, namely, potent and dangerous. He held that they were such primarily because they were the abode of a specially high charge of supernatural power. Such occurrences and such things could not be approached by the ordinary mortal without grave danger. It was necessary to set aside and train up a special class of holy men, namely the primitive priests, shamans or medicine-men, who could safely handle these potent, sacred processes and materials and control them for the benefit of the community. With the development of religion, sanctity became particularly associated with the alleged residence, monuments and the literary revelations of the gods. The Ark of the Covenant among the ancient Hebrews,

specially holy places according to Old Testament, the Holy Bible in orthodox interpretation, and the sacraments of the church well illustrate the nature of this Christian notion of sanctity and sacred things.

The conception of things sacred is a peculiarly effective and prevalent stumbling-block to intellectual progress and logical analysis. As long as we are able to maintain the notion of the sanctity of anything, it is quite impossible to subject it effectively to the analytical scrutiny of science and the sceptical mind. Sacred things do not admit of secular analysis, however refined, objective and precise. For example, the sacred nature of the Christian Bible was the main thing which retarded for centuries the application of scholarly methods to the discovery of the nature and authorship of Holy Writ. It has been the conception of the sacred nature of the sacraments of the Christian Church which has allowed the development of a curious and preposterous mass of metaphysical rationalizations and has prevented the speedy clearing up of the alleged mysterious nature of the sacraments through their analysis from the point of view of psychology, anthropology and cultural history. The orthodox, particularly the orthodox Catholic, definitions and interpretations of the sacraments will not stand up under astute anthropological analysis for a single hour, and yet they have endured for nearly two thousand years and are accepted by the present-day Catholic layman with as little scepticism as they were by the illiterate medieval Catholic peasant. We have, then, in this notion of sanctity the hypothesis of a special category of objects, processes and attitudes which take on their peculiar character by virtue of a direct relationship to the supernatural world.

III. IS ORTHODOX CHRISTIANITY A MAN OF STRAW AND A BOGY OF THE SCEPTIC?

The orthodox, of course, do not object to the statement that Fundamentalist Christianity represents true Christianity and that the validity of Christianity depends very specifically and entirely upon the accuracy of the orthodox contention. One of the leading Fundamentalists, Dr. John Roach Straton of New York City, recently stated the attitude of orthodoxy as follows:

> What is Christianity, you ask? Well, it is not a system of human thought, not a philosophy, not primarily a theology, but a revealed religion with definite historic foundations. Yes, Christianity is the one religion founded on definite, established, historic facts—including the creation of the world and man; man's rebellion against God; the promised redemption of the race; the coming of the Savior miraculously conceived, born the son of God in a unique sense, who lived a sinless life and died a vicarious death as a substitute for sin, who actually arose in the body, ascended into heaven, and will come again to judge the quick and the dead—all of these facts, I say, are established by the record book, the Bible. Now if the Bible is rejected or its integrity or divine authorship impugned, then its authority is no longer dependable and Christianity is lost.

The more liberal or Modernist theologians in Christian circles are prone, however, to resent the identification of Christianity with orthodoxy and they contend that to summarize and dissect orthodoxy is an entirely unfair exercise. They hold that to do so is nothing more than to create and tear down a man of straw. They hold that orthodoxy is a mere bogy of the hostile critics of Christianity and is no longer subscribed to by any considerable body of Christians. When the present writer attacked orthodox Christianity some months ago he was widely ac-

cused by Modernists of attacking a man of straw and of having been unaware of religious developments which have taken place in the last century. The Rev. Dr. William Adams Brown of Union Theological Seminary accused the writer of "fighting a bogy of his own construction." The Rev. D. Robert G. Armstrong of Pittsfield, Massachusetts, likewise charged him with being entirely oblivious to all theological developments since the time of Cotton Mather.

It is obvious, however, to all thoughtful and candid observers of contemporary Christianity that those who still support a literal version of orthodox Christianity infinitely outnumber those who accept the liberal or Modernist interpretation of the Christian Epic. This is even more true of Europe than the United States, for in Europe the highly orthodox cults, such as Catholicism and Lutheranism, predominate. Still, there can be no doubt whatever that orthodoxy continues to maintain a strangle hold upon American Christianity. Real Modernism is confined to the Universalists and Unitarians, and the more liberal fringe of the Congregationalists, Episcopalians, and the evangelical groups. The southern churches, from the Episcopalians to the Baptists, retain a most primitive version of orthodoxy. The state of mind which lay back of the Scopes trial in the summer of 1925 is characteristic of the Southern religious mentality as a whole. A few heroic liberals in this area merely constitute the exceptions to the general rule of benighted pietism. During the religious controversies of the last few months, growing out of the writer's paper before the New York Academy of Medicine and the History of Science Society in December, 1928, he received the following letter from a distinguished Georgia attorney, which admirably summarizes the religious conditions south of the Mason and Dixon line:

I have read your several articles defending your statement that we need a new conception of God with keen interest and heartily agree with you. It seems to me that you have the better of the argument in the light of the information we have on the origin of this conception.

However, I do not believe you can realize how much you are in the minority, unless you are better acquainted with conditions in the country than most men in your position. Here in Georgia, I do not believe that a Liberal sermon has ever been preached in a single Methodist, Baptist or Presbyterian church, and these denominations have practically all the church membership in the State. By a Liberal sermon I do not mean one of the kind you would approve. I just mean one that admits the inerrancy of the Bible, questions the virgin birth of Christ, and the facts of miracles. There is not a church of these denominations in the State (or any other Southern state to my mind) that would keep a preacher a month who would preach such a sermon, nor can a man teach in the schools that publicly says much along these lines.

The best preachers, that is, the ones who occupy pulpits in the large churches, preach the infallibility of the scriptures and the power of prayer still to perform miracles. (The Georgia Baptist Convention in 1918 prayed for the Lord to stop the ravages of the "Flu" and not a voice was raised in protest.) It is quite common for preachers to pray for rain, the allaying of storms and floods and they teach that such prayers are effective. There is no end to what they claim.

Such doctrines are also taught in their seminaries and I see no hope of a change for a long time, certainly not until the passages of several generations. I am glad you are hammering them and hope you will keep it up. I myself quit a Baptist church in which I had been active for years for just such claims and attitudes on the part of the pastors and congregations.

While the Southern Baptists and Methodists represent the most rock-ribbed and primordial of all Protestant orthodox sects it should not be forgotten that the Northern convocations are frequently far from liberal. In the sum-

mer of 1929 Bishop Francis J. McConnell of the Methodist Episcopal Church, President of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ, was prevented by the Northern Baptist Convention from being presented as the principal speaker of the occasion. Certain parts of the middle and far West are extremely primitive in their theological outlook, and portions of California, such as Los Angeles, rival the Fundamentalism of Tennessee.

The following statistics of the membership of the leading religious sects in the United States at the close of the year 1928, together with the gains or losses during that year, will make clear the fact that the Catholic and evangelical Protestant groups overwhelmingly dominate the religious field in America. It is a melancholy exercise to compare the 62,000 Unitarians with the 17,000,000 Catholics and the 9,000,000 Methodists and 9,000,000 Baptists. The situation is likely to get worse, as the figures indicate that the sects harboring the Fundamentalists are those which are growing most rapidly.

MEMBERSHIP AND GAINS OF RELIGIOUS GROUPS

JANUARY, 1929

	Communicants	*Gains*
Adventists (5 bodies)	154,690	2,826
Assemblies of God	82,918	10,775
Baptists (14 bodies)	9,088,449	375,842
Brethren (Dunkards)	165,111	3,077
Christian Church	105,684	*3,957
Christian Scientist	292,098	——
Church of the Nazarene	74,057	5,445
Congregationalists	928,558	13,860
Disciples of Christ	1,972,406	173,093
Eastern Catholics	765,929	500
Evangelical Churches	234,255	*5,213

	Communicants	*Gains*
Evangelical Synod of North America	287,115	*49,003
Federated Churches	59,997	59,997
Friends (4 bodies)	112,551	*1,054
Latter Day Saints (2 bodies)	670,701	25,549
Lutheran (19 bodies)	2,714,685	58,527
Mennonites (13 bodies)	99,982	2,438
Methodists (16 bodies)	9,164,720	45,145
Moravians (2 bodies)	30,772	831
Presbyterians (9 bodies)	2,639,347	42,211
Protestant Episcopal	1,215,383	24,445
Reformed (3 bodies)	564,003	10,362
Roman Catholic	17,095,844	360,153
Salvation Army	82,306	1,082
Scandinavian Evangelical	53,290	4,700
Unitarians	62,240	——
United Brethren (2 bodies)	419,816	5,998
Universalists	48,221	——
Volunteers of America	28,756	——
Independent congregations	34,501	*14,172
Others	395,528	——
Total	49,605,720	1,114,987

*Decrease.

It is impossible to state with exactness the number of Fundamentalists in these sects. All good Catholics are, of course, Fundamentalists. There is no doubt that Fundamentalists greatly predominate in all the evangelical Protestant groups. The Presbyterians are the most liberal of the lot, but when the test came over Dr. Fosdick's creed the great majority of their clergymen voted for Fundamentalism. Dr. Dieffenbach thus comments on this episode in his *Religious Liberty:*

For five years he [Dr. Fosdick] was the occasion of a long and bitter quarrel, which ran through one Presbyterian General Assembly after another and made a schism in the Church. When the test came, only one hundred and fifty Presbyterian

ministers in a total of ten thousand—that is, one half of one per cent.—made a plea for more liberal interpretation of Presbyterian beliefs . . . Fosdick made his exit, and Calvin and the sixteenth century still dominate the Church.

There is little doubt that the Presbyterian ministers are more liberal than their congregations.

Unfortunately, we all too often have to rely upon general impressions as to the extent and persistence of orthodox religious beliefs. We have recently, however, had placed at our disposal an important quantitative study in this field. Professor George Herbert Betts, in his interesting little book, *The Beliefs of Seven Hundred Ministers*, has presented us with a very illuminating sample of the present status of religious beliefs. These seven hundred ministers represented returns from five hundred active clergymen in Chicago and vicinity and from two hundred theological students drawn from five theological schools representing three major Protestant denominations and widely separated in location. Inasmuch as no Catholic clergymen were included, and in the light of the fact that ministers in a large metropolitan area like Chicago are much more liberal than those preaching in rural areas and small cities, we may legitimately assume that the five hundred active ministers who submitted returns represent decisively more liberal views than those which prevail throughout the country at large. The results are therefore peculiarly devastating to the contention of those who maintain that orthodox Christianity has all but disappeared from the United States of America and that to summarize and condemn the orthodox version of Christianity in America today is indeed to create and destroy a preposterous man of straw.

We may present herewith some of the more important results obtained by Dr. Betts's questionnaire. Of the 500 ministers 100 per cent. believe that God exists; 98 per

cent. believe that the relation of God to man is best expressed by the word "Father"; 95 per cent. believe that God is a being with personal attributes, complete and perfect in all moral qualities; 71 per cent. believe that Jesus was born of a virgin without a human father; 82 per cent. believe that while on earth Jesus possessed and used his powers to restore the dead to life; 84 per cent. believe that after Jesus was dead and buried he actually rose from the dead, leaving the tomb empty; 92 per cent. believe that there is a continuance of life after death; 62 per cent. believe in the literal resurrection of the body; 61 per cent. believe that a considerable part of the human race will suffer eternal punishment because of their rejection of Christ; 66 per cent. believe that Jesus will come again to judge all mankind, both living and dead; 60 per cent. believe that death and suffering were brought into the world by the disobedience of Adam and Eve and that man was originally in a state of complete moral perfection which he lost by his disobedience and fall; 64 per cent. believe that prayer has the power to change conditions in nature, such as drought; 83 per cent. believe that prayer for others directly affects their lives whether or not they know that such prayer is being offered; 94 per cent. believe that God now acts upon or operates in human lives through the agency and person of the Holy Spirit; 47 per cent. believe that the creation of the world occurred in the manner and time recorded in Genesis; 57 per cent. believe that heaven exists as an actual place or location, and 53 per cent. believe that hell exists as an actual place or location. These results make it clear that even in a relatively enlightened community the clergymen overwhelmingly adhere to the essentials of orthodoxy.

The chief source of assurance and gratification to the liberally-minded student which emerges from Dr. Betts's

study is the progress manifested in the replies of the 200 theological students as compared with the beliefs of the 500 active ministers. For example, whereas 60 per cent. of the ministers declared for the belief in the Devil as an actual person only 9 per cent. of the theological students took this view; whereas 56 per cent. of the ministers held that in biblical times God manifested himself to persons in a manner which no longer occurs, only 13 per cent. of the theological students accepted such a statement; whereas 55 per cent. of the ministers held that the Bible was written by men chosen and supernaturally endowed by God for that purpose and by Him given the exact message they were to write, only 8 per cent. of the theological students concurred in this position; whereas 38 per cent. of the ministers held that the Bible is wholly free from legend or myth, only 4 per cent. of the theological students shared this viewpoint; whereas over 50 per cent. of the ministers believed that heaven and hell exist as actual locations, only 11 per cent. of the theological students so believed; whereas 62 per cent. of the ministers believed in the resurrection of the body, only 18 per cent. of the theological students retained this belief; whereas 53 per cent. of the ministers believed that all men being sons of Adam are born with natures wholly perverse, sinful and depraved, only 13 per cent. of the theological students supported this attitude; whereas 46 per cent. of the ministers held that in order to be a Christian it is necessary and essential to believe in the Virgin birth of Jesus only 3 per cent. of the theological students gave their assent to this viewpoint.

It is apparent, therefore, that we can observe intellectual and scholarly progress on the part of the present generation of theological students who are being trained in representative institutions and will produce the preachers of the next generation. Yet, lest we are thereby led to believe

that Advanced Modernism is rampant in the theological seminaries, it is desirable to point out that, in regard to 11 crucial items out of the 56 in the questionnaire, more than three-quarters of both the ministers and theological students definitely concurred. We print below these 11 items with the percentage of those who gave an affirmative to the propositions advanced:

1. There is a supreme being; God exists (100%).
3. God is omnipotent (80%).
4. God's relation to man is that of Father (98%).
8. God controls the universe through his personal presence and power (82%).
13. God is a being with personal attributes, complete and perfect in all moral qualities (90%).
27. Jesus while on earth was subject to temptation as are other men (97%).
28. Jesus met his problems and difficulties using only those powers and resources available to all men (76%).
29. Jesus lived a life on earth without sin (87%).
39. Life continues after death (95%).
48. Forgiveness of sin is essential to a right relationship with God (96%).
52. God operates on human lives through the agency and person of the Holy Spirit (91%).

Another very interesting confirmation of the thesis that orthodoxy still prevails in the United States is to be found in the much-discussed compilation *Middletown* by Mr. and Mrs. Robert S. Lynd. This is a study of Muncie, Indiana, a fairly representative small American industrial city. Part Five of this work, on religious practices, makes it perfectly evident that orthodoxy reigns almost unchallenged in this sort of locality. We shall quote only one or two representative citations. The minister of the second largest Protestant church in Muncie stated that:

Christ's teachings are plain . . . Twenty centuries have added to them *nothing* out of human experience, nor can any other centuries add to them, for they are the teachings of God walking in human flesh . . . All human philosophy, reasoning, is alike; it is no more than the newspaper—just for the hour; but the Bible, read as a child would read it, is for the ages. Prophecy, knowledge, philosophy, creed, catechism, . . . all fail; the Word abides.

The minister of the largest church in Muncie stated in regard to the Bible:

The Bible is the only great book that even attempts a sane, reasonable interpretation of the origin, orderly conduct, and destiny of the world and of man . . . The study of the Bible is the surest path to great ability which can be found. If you would develop character and be mighty for good among men, first be mighty in communion with God and commit to memory His thoughts.

Even the minister most interested in progressive religious education in Muncie had the following to say of the Bible and Jesus:

The Bible is the greatest book in the world; we might lose all the other books in the world and not be much worse off. Jesus is the greatest man that ever lived; we might lose all the other men that ever lived and not miss them much, but Jesus is indispensable.

Not only are our ministers overwhelmingly orthodox, our educators, taken as a whole, seem about equally archaic in their beliefs, even though Professor Leuba some years ago exposed a surprising degree of heterodoxy and scepticism among the more distinguished scholars of the country. Recently Dr. Manley H. Harper made a careful study of 3,000 representative educators drawn from all classes and grades in the population and from all sections of the country. They were, in general, highly conservative

on religious questions and no less than 77 per cent. of them expressed the opinion that "one should never allow his own experience and reason to lead him in ways that he knows are contrary to the teachings of the Bible."

Another very conclusive proof of the religious conservatism of educators as well as of the country at large is to be found in the furor aroused by the present writer's above-mentioned address on "Medical Science Versus Religion as a Guide to Life," given before the History of Science Society and the New York Academy of Medicine on December 29, 1928.[3] Whatever the religious views of the writer, he said nothing in this address or in the published abstract of the address which should have been challenged by even a conservative Modernist. All he called for was a reconstruction of God and religion in harmony with the knowledge of the present day. Yet he was denounced in thousands of pulpits, in thousands of letters contributed to the public press and in scores of articles. Even the Modernists as a group were fearful of coming to his defense. He is held to be the veritable anti-Christ in those portions of the Bible belt into which reports of the address and the subsequent discussion penetrated.

In candor and fairness, however, it is desirable to point out that Professor Henry Fairfield Osborn was frequently unfairly criticized and was represented as having defended the orthodox version of religion. The fact is, however, that Mr. Osborn did not specifically challenge or approve the statements made by the writer in the afore-mentioned address. He simply contended, whether rightly or wrongly, that the paper was inappropriate for the meeting in which it was delivered. His comments did not in any way align him with either orthodoxy or scepticism. Indeed, it is well known from his book, *The Earth Speaks to Bryan*, and

[3] Published in *Medical Life*, June, 1929.

other writings of similar character that Professor Osborn is decisively opposed to Fundamentalist views on science. At the time of the delivery of the writer's address he was placed in a peculiarly embarrassing position. He was the titular head of the American Association for the Advancement of Science at its annual meeting in December, 1928, and therefore indirectly and formally responsible for what went on therein. He was at this very time in the midst of an extensive endowment campaign for the American Museum of Natural History, and his Endowment Committee was made up overwhelmingly of orthodox Protestants and Catholics. It was therefore necessary for him to make some gesture which would placate his Committee, and, in the light of the tenseness of the situation, his observations on the writer's paper may be regarded as singularly restrained.

As a resounding summary of the pith of orthodoxy we may close this chapter with the citation of an abstract of a sermon by Rev. Dr. M. A. Matthews, a leading Protestant clergyman of Seattle, Washington, entitled "America's Need":

America's greatest need at the present time is Evangelistic Fire!

The churches show the lowest drop of the scale of evangelistic work and results that they have shown at any time in the *past one hundred years.* As a consequence every department of life is suffering. The morale of the whole country is lower. Crime has increased. Disregard for law is almost universal. Divorce is on the increase. Immorality abounds. The fences of propriety and modesty are down. These are a few of the results of the waning spirit of evangelism.

The Church is suffering most. She is cursed with unbelief and spiritual inertia. Many of her members have a name to live but are spiritually dead. They have a form of Godliness but are like whited sepulchers, filled with dead men's bones.

There is a great dearth of red-blooded laymen who believe

and are willing to fight and die for their belief. Expediency is the daily rule of action in the state and in the church. Men buy and sell positions. They do not fight and die for principles.

Churches are empty, and would-be saints are on the fields of pleasure and idleness breaking God's Holy day, wrecking the home and blasting the religious future of their children.

Many ministers know more about the rules of golf than they do about the experience of the prayer closet.

Many of the denominations lost last year, and thousands and thousands of churches did not receive even one person on profession of faith. Thousands of ministers turned from the Gospel to preach the *froth of books,* the *filth of the screen,* the *fumes of politics,* the *fatalism of philosophy,* and the *fallacy of social service* as a remedy for the sin and sorrow of the world. In fact, the preachers of America are to blame for the horrible condition in the Church and in the country.

The rationalistic preachers of the nation are the country's greatest menace. It was the infamous rationalism of Nietzscheism that plunged the world into the awful war. It is the same rationalism that is today responsible for the low state of our morality and the high state of our crime efficiency.

The infamous heresy that is today preached by rationalistic preachers is directly responsible for our social condition. *When preachers abandon the blood of Jesus Christ as the only Gospel for the salvation of men, they become Judas Iscariots, and deserve his fate.*

There is but one way to be saved and that is by regeneration through the blood of Jesus Christ. God can not save one who denies the deity of Christ and rejects His blood-bought, vicarious atonement. Therefore, there is but one gospel that can produce a revival and that is the bloodbathed gospel of Christ's death and resurrection.

When ministers become traitors and abandon that gospel the evangelistic fires go out, family altars crumble, church chancels are covered with the world's icicles, pulpits become the stalls of asses, and Ichabod appears over the doors of the churches.

Church pews cannot be filled and be kept filled by the trash from rationalistic sewers. The Water of Life does not

flow from such sources, and no one ever saw the Bread of Life on such a table. If the preachers would return to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, which includes His incarnation, His virgin birth, His crucifixion, His resurrection, His ascension, His mediatorial work and His coming again for His saints, the evangelistic fires would again burn, and men would be saved and be added to the church daily.

If ministers would again preach the revival-producing doctrine of *justification by faith only,* you would see another Reformation producing even greater results than the last one.

America's greatest need is evangelism! You will not get it until you fill the pulpits with men who can preach, and who can preach the only Gospel. If we had such men we would then find the pews filled with red-blooded laymen who believe something instead of the flabby, time-serving, expediency-governed, masculine jelly fish who are today seeking the fields of pleasure rather than the avenues of Christian duty and service in the church.

Let the church be called to prayer, and let her pray daily for gospel preachers. She should drive from her pulpits the rationalistic traitors and install instead preachers who know how to preach the blood-bought gospel of Jesus Christ. Then, the revival will begin.

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Chapter VI

BLASTING AT THE ROCK OF AGES

Evolution seems to close the heart to some of the plainest spiritual truths while it opens the mind to the wildest of guesses advanced in the name of science. . . . There ought not to be any doubt of the baneful influence such teaching will exert on young men and women trained in Christian homes and taught to regard the Bible as the Word of God.

(William Jennings Bryan)

No man's faith was ever wrecked by truth who had a faith worth saving.

(Henry C. Vedder)

I. ASPECTS OF MODERN KNOWLEDGE WHICH HAVE UNDERMINED TRADITIONAL RELIGION

In an earlier chapter (Chap. I, pp. 8ff.) we set forth very briefly certain aspects of scientific progress which have profoundly modified our view of the physical universe and have revolutionized our material culture. We do not propose to repeat this material in the present chapter. We are here concerned only with those aspects of science which bear directly upon the destruction of the intellectual and cultural complex involved in the orthodox Christian religion. We shall first indicate briefly the various scientific subjects and the branches of scholarship which have challenged both the science and the religion inherent in orthodoxy.

Astronomy has given us an altogether different picture of the physical universe from that entertained by the an-

cient Jews or the medieval Christians. Geology has presented us with a scientific conception of the evolution of the earth's structure and of life upon the planet, bringing about a completely new time perspective, as well as a thoroughly revolutionized view of the origin of existing species of plants and animals. Biology has elucidated the principles of evolution and allowed us to trace the development of organic life, thus upsetting the doctrine of a cataclysmic and perfect creation of living matter. Physiology and chemistry have made clear the enormous complexity of the constitution and organization of life and have stressed, in particular, the intricate organization of the human body and the processes going on therein. Modern physics has destroyed the old theories of causation and has made it difficult to evolve a theory of God out of the old premises of causality, law and order in the universe. Psychology has provided a naturalistic explanation of human behavior and completely discredited the hypothesis of a soul and of arbitrary free will. Anthropology has traced the evolution of human types and human culture, thus indicating the affinity of man with the animal kingdom and tracing the physical development of human types. Cultural history has given us a secularized story of the evolution of religious systems and beliefs, thus making it difficult to support the hypothesis of the divine revelation or unique validity of any religion. The social sciences have indicated the nature and development of morality and institutions, thus providing a realistic secular explanation of what had been earlier assigned to supernatural instigation. Finally, critical scholarship, applied to the Bible itself, has served thoroughly to discredit the orthodox hypothesis of the Bible as the uniquely inspired word of God. This latter phase of the undermining process has not only given us a more accurate view of the nature of the Bible; it has, of

course, also served to upset the validity of biblical science, history and religion, which were based to a large degree upon the assumption of the divine inspiration of the Christian Bible. We may now consider in logical order the reaction of science and scholarship upon the fundamental tenets of orthodoxy which we summarized in the preceding chapter.

II. THE CRUMBLING OF ORTHODOXY

Perhaps the most impressive phase of the impact of modern knowledge upon traditionalism is to be found in the new cosmology. Here the old hypothesis of a special creation some 6,000 years ago has been supplanted by the conception of universal evolution which has occupied a period of time that the human mind is entirely powerless to understand or appreciate. The evolutionary orientation has rendered necessary a complete revolution of our time perspective. In place of a very brief period of some 6,000 years for the age of the cosmos, the earth and all living matter we have to reckon with a time conception which defies both the human imagination and our conventional standards of measurement. Astronomical time is simply irreducible to human standards. There is no way of computing the vast sweep of the totality of astronomic time, and we are even unable to interpret intelligently such brief lumps of astronomic time as are apparent in well-known aspects and processes of the operation of the heavenly bodies. As a minimum estimate we should have to assign some several billions of years as the age of the earth, whereas our sun had already passed the period of maximum radiance before the earth originated some three billion years ago, probably as the result of a trivial cosmic accident. Indeed, it is likely that we shall have to admit, in the new cosmic time-perspective, that the very notion

of time as we understand it and utilize it for mundane purposes may be nothing more than a convenient geocentric illusion. Einstein and others have, in fact, suggested that time and space are but incidental manifestations of energy. The age of man in the new time perspective, instead of being coëxtensive with the duration of the earth and all heavenly bodies, must be regarded as only the briefest trifle in earth history, to say nothing of its utter insignificance in terms of cosmic history. Indeed, as compared with some of the less lovely insects, man possesses a very short and unimpressive past.

Along with this revolutionized time perspective has come the dynamic notion of change as the vital universal principle of cosmic development. In the place of the older static notions of a perfect creation a few thousand years back, with but slight subsequent alteration of the nature of the heavenly bodies, the earth and all organic life, we have been compelled to recognize that change seems to be the most vital law of cosmic development and to realize that there is no such thing as a static condition to be observed in the universe. Everything is in a state of alteration, some of this manifesting itself as development and progress while other changes definitely represent disintegration and devolution. We have, then, the conception of a dynamic and ever changing universe in the place of the static outlook of a half century ago.

Another result of the evolutionary point of view has been the definite establishment of the conceptions of growth, development and continuity. The notion of a chaotic primordial void and of the definite beginning of the physical universe and all therein as the result of a specific creative act has completely evaporated in the face of the evolutionary view. According to this latter outlook we can scarcely conceive of a beginning or an end of the physical

universe. These very notions of origins, completion and extinction are purely human formulations, and rather naïve human conceptions at that, Contemporaneously-minded human beings are already beginning to cease to think in such terms. There would be no reason for holding to such conceptions as creation except for the observation of achievements of this sort in everyday human experiences, but we have come to know that mankind's performances do not represent the real creation of anything which is new and fundamental. They mean nothing more or less than giving new forms to matter, without materially altering the basic original fact of the primal energy contained therein. If the conception of beginning and ending, even in our limited human affairs, represents a naïve and a circumscribed point of view, it is obvious that such a notion on a cosmic scale is infinitely more preposterous. Man can hope to do nothing more than to gain a very incomplete knowledge of certain of the processes of change as they manifest themselves in the physical universe, particularly in the earth and its inhabitants. The whole problem involved in the universe of universes is obviously so majestic and complicated that for man to aspire to fathom this mystery is pure presumption. Even to conceive of the beginning and end of the cosmos would indicate a very simple-minded type of anthropocentric (i.e. man-centered) perspective. If man can catch a very imperfect glimpse of an infinitely small aspect of a brief and highly fleeting phase of cosmic change, he may count himself fortunate indeed.

Modern astronomy has completely destroyed the limited and circumscribed geocentric (i.e. earth centered) conception of the universe which is entertained by the orthodox. The Copernican revolution in astronomy, which interchanged the position of the earth and the sun in our own

universal system, brought about the substitution of a heliocentric (i.e. sun centered) for a geocentric universe and implied a notable revolution in the outlook of man upon the physical universe. Yet the Copernican transformation was as nothing compared to the achievements of modern astronomy. Contemporary astrophysics has completely annihilated the old notion of a heliocentric universe and has shown that our sun and its surrounding planets represent but a most insignificant entity, even in our own galactic universe. Yet our galactic universe, roughly bounded by the Milky Way, is in itself but one item in a universe of universes. Present-day astronomers estimate that there may be a million or more galaxies in the cosmos comparable to our Milky Way and its constituent stellar groups. Indeed, there seem to be cosmic organizations of a higher order than galaxies like the Milky Way, namely, veritable clouds of galaxies, some of them containing apparently hundreds of galactic systems similar to our Milky Way. Our galactic system is thought by many astronomers to be the largest single galaxy. Yet the fact that other galactic systems are far more complex and highly organized, being veritably galaxies of galaxies, makes our sidereal universe seem small and simple by comparison. The Coma-Virgo system is estimated to contain some three hundred galaxies. The distance of some of these remote galactic systems from the earth are almost incredible. One already photographed is estimated to be some 170,000,000 light years from the earth. In his interesting book, *Exploring the Universe*, Mr. Henshaw Ward has well summarized some of these striking facts brought forward by the new astronomy which demonstrate the extremely rudimentary nature of any such conception as a heliocentric cosmos, namely, a

total physical universe dominated by our sun and its attendant planets:[1]

All sorts of uncanny knowledge about conditions in other suns are now the commonplaces of observatory talk. There are gaseous nebulae of vast area that whirl like pinwheels. There are stars in clusters, revolving about each other in courses so complicated and at such high speeds that even a mathematician must grow dizzy as he computes them. There are stars whose volume is a hundred million times that of our sun, composed of matter a million times less dense than the matter of our sun. Also there are stars composed of matter two thousand times as dense as gold, so that a pint of it would weigh nineteen tons. Some stars have an internal heat of many million degrees, and some move through space fifty times as fast as our sun travels athwart the Milky Way.

We can, perhaps, best indicate the position of the earth in the new cosmic perspective by (1) comparing the earth with other planets in our system; (2) comparing the earth and its fellow planets with the sun; (3) comparing the sun with some of the larger astral bodies which have been discovered and measured by modern astronomers; (4) indicating the nature and extent of our galactic system and the position of the sun and its planets therein; and, finally, (5) making clear the relative insignificance of even our galactic system in the cosmos as a whole.

The earth is one of the smaller of the eight planets revolving about our sun. It has a mean diameter of 7,290 miles as compared with Jupiter's diameter of 87,000 miles and Saturn's diameter of 71,000 miles. Professor David B. Todd has graphically described the relative masses of the planets and the sun in our solar system:[2]

Let an ordinary bronze cent piece represent the earth. So small are Mercury and Mars that we have no coin light

[1] Ward, *op. cit.*, p. 12.

[2] Todd, *The New Astronomy*, p. 335.

enough to compare with them; but these two planets, if merged into a single one, might be well represented by an old-fashioned silver three-cent piece; Venus, by a silver dime; Uranus, a silver dollar, half dollar, and quarter together; Neptune, two silver dollars; Saturn, eleven silver dollars; and Jupiter, thirty-seven silver dollars (rather more than two pounds avoirdupois). An inconveniently large sum of silver would be required if this comparison were to be carried farther, so as to include the sun; for he is nearly 750 times more massive than all the planets and their satellites together, and, on the same scale of comparison, he would somewhat exceed the weight of the long ton.

As with relative size and mass, so with regard to distance from the sun, the status of the earth is not impressive. The earth is some ninety-three million miles distant from the sun, whereas Neptune, the most remote planet, is 2,795,000,000 miles from the sun and requires approximately 165 of our years in which to complete one revolution about the sun. While the distance of Neptune from the sun represents a figure which it is completely impossible for the human mind intelligently to appreciate, it is most inconspicuous and unimpressive indeed when compared with lesser cosmic distances which are commonplaces in astrophysical measurements.

If our earth is fairly insignificant as compared with one of the larger planets like Jupiter, it is much less sizeable when compared with the sun. The sun's diameter is 110 times greater than that of the earth, its mass 330,000 times the mass of the earth, and its volume 1,300,000 times the volume of the earth. Yet the sun is but a mere cosmic speck compared with some of the great astral giants in our galactic system. Two of the larger stars which have been measured are Betelgeuse and Antares. The diameter of the sun is approximately 865,000 miles. The diameter of Betelgeuse is about 240,000,000 miles,

while that of Antares is approximately 400,000,000 miles. Astronomers estimate that we could pack into an astral space equal to the volume of Betelgeuse about 25,000,000 bodies equal in size to our sun, while more than 50,000,000 bodies like our sun could be conveniently stowed away within the surface of Antares. If Antares were placed with its center at the center of our solar system it would embrace the orbits of Mercury, Venus, the earth and Mars and extend out into space about 60,000,000 miles beyond the orbit of Mars. Yet astronomers admit the possibility that stars larger than Antares exist in our own galactic system and there is every probability that astral bodies infinitely larger than Antares are to be found in the million or more galactic systems which exist beyond our own galaxy or the astral system circumscribed by the Milky Way. Indeed, astronomers believe that most of the brighter stars in the Magellanic Clouds are larger than Betelgeuse.

The sun and its encompassing planets constitute what is known as our solar system. Our solar system, however, is, along with countless other solar systems, a part of what is called our galactic system which is, in a general way, bounded by the Milky Way. Our galactic system or sidereal universe is estimated to be more than 300,000 light years in diameter and 10,000 light years in thickness. If one desires to reduce these distances to miles he may do so by multiplying each of them by 6,000,000,000,000, the number of miles light travels in a year moving at the speed of 186,000 miles per second. Even this "light-year" of six trillion miles has been found too small for major astronomical computations. Hence, astronomers have adopted a new linear unit—the *parsec*—of nineteen million million miles. It is obvious that such a distance as the diameter of our galactic system completely transcends

the capacity of the human imagination. This galactic system of ours contains at the minimum estimate at least 10,000,000,000 stars, most of which are presumably great solar systems surrounded by planets which in many cases render Jupiter puny by comparison. The latest astronomical doctrines support the view that our galactic system revolves about a center close to the constellation Sagittarius, which is some 50,000 light years or 300,000,000,000,000,000 miles from the earth. Though this distance of the earth from the center of our galactic system staggers us, the earth is actually relatively close to the center as compared with many other astral groups belonging to our galaxy. Astronomers believe that at the center of our galactic system there is a tremendous concentration of stars, estimated to number at least 100,000,000. The astronomers estimate that our galactic system turns about this great cluster of stars near Sagittarius once in every 300,000,000 years. Therefore, the galactic day of our galactic system is equal to 300,000,000 multiplied by 365 of our earthly days.

It is obvious from the preceding facts that our solar system almost disappears in terms of the galactic system of which it is a part. As Professor Shapley says: "Instead of being the center of this universe, our sun is but an insignificant speck around which flits a shadow called the earth." Yet our entire galactic system, with its diameter of more than 300,000 light years and its family of more than ten billion stars and enveloping planets, is but a small and elementary unit in the galaxy of galaxies of galaxies, or the physical cosmos as a whole. Astronomers have not only discovered other galaxies similar to our galactic system or sidereal universe, but have even located or isolated what seem to them to be actual clouds of galaxies. Observers have already begun to conceive not only of a

galaxy of galaxies but of a galaxy of galaxies of galaxies, and there seems to be no logical reason why we should stop at this point. It might be observed, however, that for practical purposes we might well stop with the conception of a galactic system like our own sidereal universe, inasmuch as the human mind is quite incapable of grappling realistically with what is involved in one galactic system. One brilliant astronomer has estimated that the cosmos as a whole may have a diameter of approximately 150,000,000,000,000,000,000,000 miles. It is obvious that this can be only an intelligent gesture in assessing cosmic space. Even if correct, it involves figures that mean little or nothing literally to the human mind. In the *Forum* for June, 1929, Professor Shapley presents a brilliant description of the nature, extent and center of our galactic system. In doing so he brings forward astrophysical conceptions, distances and masses which transcend all possibility of intelligent comparison with human experiences here upon the earth. He then proceeds to indicate that, even so, he has not even mentioned up to this point the nature and implications of surveying the physical cosmos as a whole. We reproduce herewith professor Shapley's impressive conclusions, which represent the most complex and expansive development of contemporary astrophysical speculation:

From star clusters, from stellar motions, and from the study of variable stars, we appear to have found the center of our galactic universe. But obviously we have not even groped for the center of the universe of all material things. Our galaxy is but one of hundreds of thousands. We know a little about ours, but practically nothing about the others except that they exist, that they are very remote, that the nearest ones are composed of stars, that their motions are high, and—most significant of all—that many of them are congregated into systems of still higher order. When we speak of the center of the universe, we should do better to consider the center of one

of these systems of higher order, of the Coma-Virgo cloud of galaxies, for instance, with its three hundred members.

But why not go further and see if the various clouds of galaxies that are now coming to light do not themselves form a still higher system? At two or three of the observatories, astronomers are busily engaged in investigating the outside galaxies. Several thousand new ones have been discovered and classified at the Harvard Observatory during the past year or two. With sufficient financial support for telescopes and observers, and a generous allowance of time, we shall be able to decide ultimately if there is evidence of a galaxy of these galaxies of galaxies within man's feeble though ambitious grasp.

Finally, the astronomer is asked why he seeks out these vast facts about the center of the universe. "For the sake of pure knowledge," he might reply; "for the satisfaction of demonstrating the possible range of human thought and comprehension, regardless of the consequences." But alas! most of us do not rise to this high, unselfish, and unhuman ideal. We see in the new astronomical revelations the stuff that philosophic dreams are made of. We see the stars as providers of human interest of the deepest kind—as feeders of the inherent religious hunger.

The study of the structure of the Milky Way is a part of the general advance of pure science designed to reveal man's place in the universe. If we are to forget the mean Earth and its brief day and year—and in our highest moments we all try to transcend such obsessions; if we are to contemplate the meaning of the universe: we must first try to know it, by measure, count, chemistry, and evolutionary tendencies. That is why the scientist labors on the description of a universe that has enmeshed man, time, thought, and galaxies, all in one complex aggregate.

We have devoted considerable space to certain of the rudiments of the revelations of contemporary astronomy. We have done so because we feel that this field of scientific investigation is incomparably more potent and significant than any other phase of recent scientific research in its

bearing upon the issues of conventional religion and morals. Not only all of orthodox Christianity, but even much of Modernistic theological speculation has been based upon incredibly petty geocentric premises. It has been assumed that the earth was the chief product of God's creative endeavor and the supreme object of His divine solicitude. So important has the earth been deemed in theological perspective that it seemed reasonable that God should have sent His Only Begotten Son to serve as a vicarious sacrifice to atone for the sins of a small group of relatively backward peoples dwelling at the extreme eastern end of the Mediterranean Sea twenty centuries ago. Even Modernists who reject the orthodox notion of the literal divinity and vicarious sacrifice of Jesus, very generally represent Jesus as offering in his personality and life a model or replica of the nature and behavior of the cosmic God, namely, the originator and administrator of the galaxy of galaxies of galaxies. In our present cosmic perspective it would seem more reasonable to suppose that our particular solar system has not even been noted and catalogued in the astronomical star chart of the cosmic Deity, if we even desire to continue the obviously preposterous habit of discussing cosmic situations in terms of earthly knowledge and experience. That the cosmic God, if there be one, has ever taken special cognizance of the nebulous personality and uncertain teachings of an historically vague and inconspicuous religious teacher who lived in ancient Palestine some two thousand years ago represents a conception which can be entertained only by a person seriously circumscribed by ignorance or limited in intellectual power. That this same religious teacher could have been in any literal way the Only Begotten Son of the Administrator of the Cosmos is a notion too child-

ish to receive even passing comment. These new astrophysical conceptions and perspectives also indicate the logic and propriety in any such suggestion as that of Rev. Straton, Jr., that we should all "make a chum of God."

It is scarcely necessary to point out that contemporary astrophysics destroys for all time the theological picture of the astral realms such as that embodied in the orthodox notion of heaven or the heavens, located somewhere above the blue dome of the firmament.

Contemporary astrophysics brings about by implication as great a revolution in conventional views of morals as it does in orthodox conceptions of religion. In his recent and interesting book, *Science: the False Messiah*, Mr. Clarence Ayres holds that modern astrophysical discoveries have little bearing upon the practical issues of every-day life. He contends, for example, that "morality is never likely to take cognizance of the magnitude of Betelgeuse." Such a view might seem plausible at first to an eminent Rotarian or Fundamentalist, but it is a strange position to be defended by a liberally-inclined person of philosophic tendencies. It would be difficult to conceive of anything more relevant than the matter of Betelgeuse in relation to our contemporary moral conceptions. If we had not discovered another solitary scientific fact in the last century, the implications of the size and distance of Betelgeuse would alone be adequate to blow sky-high the foundations of the whole set of moral conceptions of Judaism and Christianity. These were based upon a geocentric theology, and their plausibility disappears the moment the geocentric basis is removed. Betelgeuse not only wipes out the notion of a geocentric universe and God but likewise obliterates that of a heliocentric cosmos. All of the assumptions and premises underlying orthodox Judaism

and Fundamentalist Christianity evaporate the moment one grasps thoroughly what is implied in the recent discoveries concerning Betelgeuse or Antares. Once these theological props for conventional morality disappear, we may secure a notable reconstruction of ethics in harmony with scientific facts and æsthetic principles. It would seem, therefore, that Mr. Ayres could not well have been more unfortunate in the striking figure which he chose to illustrate the irrelevance of modern science for human conduct.

It is the position of the writer that if there had been no other striking form of advance in natural science in the last fifty years outside of the field of astronomy, this last alone would be sufficient in itself completely to destroy the whole foundations of orthodox Judaism and Christianity, as well as all other forms of world religion resting upon a geocentric basis. Some have contended that we are prone to exaggerate the significance of modern astrophysical discoveries, inasmuch as the latter are chiefly concerned with impressive considerations of size, distance and the like. It is contended that size alone is not all-important. The writer will at once concede that such things as volume, mass, distance, speed and the like do not in themselves establish unique significance or import. The fact is, however, that modern astrophysics has demonstrated much besides staggering distances, appalling speed of motion and almost incredible volume. It has revealed a sidereal universe, complex and baffling to the human mind, and has proved the existence of a cosmos made up of countless other sidereal universes or galactic systems. In other words, it has provided us with an absolutely different conception of the material universe from that which has been available to any previous generation of men. This has rendered preposterous any ultimate scheme of things or any

fundamental interpretation of the universe and man in geocentric or anthropocentric terms. All of orthodoxy and much of apologetic Modernism having been constructed in geocentric and anthropocentric perspective, modern astrophysics rules this type of religious and cosmological formulation entirely out of court.

Many persons have from time to time expressed curiosity as to why a branch of learning so fatal to orthodoxy has never been the object of bitter attack by the faithful. The explanation is not difficult to seek. Modern astrophysics represents a complex of conceptions extremely difficult for the uneducated to appropriate and interpret. Discussions of galactic systems are much less intelligible than the vulgarization of evolutionary doctrine to the effect that "man came from the monkeys" or the rudimentary generalization from higher criticism to the effect that Moses did not write the Pentateuch. Therefore, the heresy hunters have tended to let the astronomers rest in peace and have contented themselves with gunning for biologists and biblical scholars. As an actual matter of fact, any good book summarizing modern astrophysics is more directly and comprehensively destructive to orthodox Christianity than all the work done thus far in biology and biblical criticism combined. Most sensible persons will be willing, of course, to concede that contemporary astrophysics is much more likely to produce an attitude of mundane humility and cosmic reverence than the old biblical or medieval astronomy. This is, however, quite a different matter from upholding the tenets of orthodoxy.

It is readily apparent that the findings of modern astrophysics necessitate a complete revolution in all older conceptions of God based upon geocentric and anthropomorphic formulations and considerations. At the outset we may note that our present-day knowledge in regard to

the physical universe at once disposes of the Old Testament Yahweh. Even though Cardinal Hayes may regard it as "an outrageous shock," it nevertheless remains true that a God constructed by relatively ignorant thinkers in an age which knew nothing of modern astronomic discoveries cannot endure for a moment when examined candidly in the new cosmic perspective. This fact has been admirably stated by the Rev. Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick:

> The old imaginative framework in which our fathers commonly thought of God has collapsed. What a cosy stage was furnished by the old cosmology, with its flat earth and its close, convenient heaven, on which the religious imagination could picture its gods, their entrances and exits! Centuries will certainly pass before religious symbolism fully is transferred to the setting of the new astronomy. . . .
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> That entire belief depends for its picturableness upon the old astronomy. Granted a flat earth with heaven a little way above, granted Jesus' resurrection conceived in terms of flesh and his ascension conceived as physical levitation through the clouds to the divine dwelling in the sky, granted the picture of him there "at the right hand of God"—and his return on the clouds by the same route he went is as easily imaginable as the return of a friend from San Francisco. That was the cosmological picture in which the expectation first arose; that is the cosmological picture which sustained it for centuries; and the marvel is not that it should have existed from the days of the first Disciples on, but that now, when there is no longer any up or down, or heaven beyond the clouds, men on this whirling planet in the sky should still be preserving in religious imagination what they have discarded everywhere else. . . .
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> What, then, shall the religious man do? He cannot take in earnest the man-sized representations of God on which, it may be, he was brought up—a God walking in a garden in the cool of the day, making woman from man's rib, confounding men's speech lest they build a tower too high, decreeing a flood to drown humanity, trying to slay a man at

a wayside inn because his child was not circumcised, showing his back but not his face to a man upon a mountain-top, or ordering the massacre of his chosen people's enemies, men, women and children, without mercy. He is in revolt against all that, as Euripides, over four centuries before Christ, rebelled against the Gods of Olympus.

There are many who will admit that modern astronomy disposes of the biblical conception of God as the tribal deity of the ancient nomadic Hebrews, but contend that there were later and more developed biblical notions of God which are thoroughly compatible with our contemporary astrophysical outlook. Such persons point to Amos' identification of God with the principle of social justice and Jesus' notion of God as love. While both of these views of God are certainly a great advance over the notion of a savage tribal deity, they are in no sense capable of being harmonized with contemporary views of the cosmos. Both Amos and Jesus conceived of God in purely geocentric and anthropocentric terms. Amos was thinking of earthly justice and Jesus of earthly love or at least the love of an anthropomorphic God. Neither Amos nor Jesus possessed the slightest inkling of our modern knowledge of the extent and complexity of the cosmos. Likewise we should have to regard as inadequate and no longer tenable the best conceptions of God formulated by the religious liberals of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. A view of God like that held by the Earl of Shaftesbury, namely, that of a benign cosmic being, with the qualities of the most amiable and cultured British gentleman of the year 1700, who had started the universe in motion in conformity with natural law, while enormously superior to the Old Testament Yahweh, is scarcely more compatible with our present-day knowledge and attitudes.

To show that the God of the Bible cannot be harmo-

nized with present-day knowledge is a very simple matter and the demonstration is convincing to any person of respectable literacy. The problems connected with the possibility of fashioning a new conception of God, consistent with modern knowledge and at the same time definitive in character, is a much more relevant issue. The first consideration to be set forth in this connection is the necessity of avoiding all dogmatism in regard to this problem. It seems to the writer utterly foolish and indefensible today for a thoroughly informed modern scholar either to deny or affirm the existence of God. The complexity and difficulty of the problem remove the whole issue from the realm of finite certainty. If the accumulated evidence concerning the extent and complexity of the cosmos serves to render any plausible conception of God ever more majestic and impressive, this same information likewise enormously increases the difficulty of reducing any reasonable notion of a cosmic God to human terms which are scientifically defensible and logically convincing.

The writer is here chiefly concerned with calling attention to the fact that the contemporary picture of the universe wipes out for all time the biblical notions of God. It may not, however, be out of place to deal with certain cogent issues which arise with respect to the possibility of constructing a conception of God compatible with contemporary knowledge. In the first place, it is quite obvious that we can formulate a logical and tenable conception of a cosmic God only in terms of the works of such a deity. The cosmic theist accepts as basic in his reasoning the thesis that God is the originator and administrator of the cosmos and that everything which takes place therein is literally the work of the cosmic Deity. It is for this reason that the cosmic theist cannot logically evade the implications involved in the facts and processes of physical na-

ture. We can, then, understand God only when we are able to grasp and interpret the physical universe as a whole. In other words, we cannot very well fathom the problem of God unless we are able to encompass his works. It seems to the writer quite obvious that the works of God, if we so regard the facts and processes of the physical universe, have already been shown completely to have outdistanced the capacities of the human intellect. We have already made it clear that the human mind is entirely incapable of any realistic and practical interpretation of the nature and meaning of our own sidereal universe or galactic system, whereas the astronomers have already proved the existence of galaxies made up of clouds of other galaxies. The human mind simply balks at any such task as intelligently envisaging what such a cosmos really is or implies. We may describe the cosmos glibly in the technical terms of the astronomer, but we are not actually describing the cosmos as it is. We are merely attempting very imperfectly to translate it into terms of human experience and earthly perspective, though man is almost incapable of receiving or assimilating facts of a cosmic order. In other words, long before we have begun to approach the boundaries of cosmic reality we have completely outdistanced the intellectual power of man. A Shapley may talk about a galaxy of galaxies of galaxies, but even he can penetrate only slightly into the real nature and meaning of such terms and their literal implications. To the uninformed layman they mean next to nothing.

If we go to the other extreme from the work of the descriptive astronomer and examine the more recent investigations which have been made in regard to the structure of the atom, by Bohr, Schrödinger and others, we likewise come into a realm which defies the expert as far as the matter of ultimate interpretation is concerned. Modern

physicists have demonstrated that energy is the physical ultimate, and that matter, space and time are but incidental manifestations of energy. This ultimate physical fact of energy is thought to be generated when one of the electrons in an atom jumps from a larger to a smaller orbit. These recent investigations in electro-dynamics have completely destroyed the older conceptions of physical causality which had developed in the period between Newton and Helmholtz. In a notable article on "The New Vision of Science" in *Harper's Magazine* for March, 1929, Professor P. W. Bridgman of Harvard University thus describes how modern physics has destroyed the old doctrines of causation and made it impossible for man at the present time at least to offer any rational explanation of physical causation:

> The thesis of this article is that the age of Newton is now coming to a close, and that recent scientific discoveries have in store an even greater revolution in our entire outlook than the revolution effected by the discovery of universal gravitation by Newton. The revolution that now confronts us arises from the recent discovery of new facts, the only interpretation of which is that our conviction that nature is understandable and subject to law arose from the narrowness of our horizons, and that if we sufficiently extend our range we shall find that nature is intrinsically and in its elements neither understandable nor subject to law. . . .
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> The same situation confronts the physicist everywhere; whenever he penetrates to the atomic or electronic level in his analysis, he finds things acting in a way for which he never can assign a cause, and for which the concept of cause has no meaning, if Heisenberg's principle is right. This means nothing more nor less than that the law of cause and effect must be given up. The precise reason that the law of cause and effect fails can be paradoxically stated; it is not that the future is not determined in terms of a complete description of the present, but that in the nature of things the present cannot be completely described. . . .

The physicist thus finds himself in a world from which the bottom has dropped clean out; as he penetrates deeper and deeper it eludes him and fades away by the highly unsportsmanlike device of just becoming meaningless. No refinement of measurement will avail to carry him beyond the portals of this shadowy domain which he cannot even mention without logical inconsistency. A bound is thus forever set to the curiosity of the physicist. What is more, the mere existence of this bound means that he must give up his most cherished convictions and faith. The world is not a world of reason, understandable by the intellect of man, but as we penetrate ever deeper, the very law of cause and effect, which we had thought to be a formula to which we could force God Himself to subscribe, ceases to have meaning. The world is not intrinsically reasonable or understandable; it acquires these properties in ever-increasing degree as we ascend from the realm of the very little to the realm of every-day things; here we may eventually hope for an understanding sufficiently good for all practical purposes, but no more.

From the foregoing it would seem that the essential facts about the physical universe which have been assembled by astronomers, physicists and physical chemists render the task of the would-be cosmic theist almost, if not quite, insuperable. If God manifests Himself in the processes of nature and if man cannot adequately or intelligently interpret nature, it seems quite apparent that we are not likely to be able to establish a conception of God on the basis of his works. Still further, even though we were able to interpret causality in terms of the quantum theory of the atom, this would not necessarily bring us directly to any satisfactory or demonstrable proof of God. Professor A. S. Eddington, one of the most religiously-inclined among the leaders in modern physics and astronomy, admits that there is no necessary relationship between the quantum theory of the atom and any doctrine of God. In other words, a conclusive explanation of the

behavior of the electron would not lead us directly to any definitive notion of the cosmic Deity.

Another set of limitations and difficulties inherent in the human search for God should be referred to at least briefly. In the first place, as the basic instrument utilized in our search for God, we start with the human intellect. The intelligence of man surpasses the intelligence of any other form of living matter by an enormous distance, yet we must remember that it is nothing more than the intellectual power residing in the brain of an animal which has very recently appeared upon one of the most insignificant bodies in the cosmos. The prospect that this highly limited and restricted human intellect could possibly envisage the majesty and wisdom of God seems remote indeed. Indeed, it seems very unlikely that man can even formulate intelligently and adequately the nature of the problems involved in the search for God. In addition to the limitations of the instrument which man uses in seeking God, we have a second handicap or obstacle arising out of the fact that we must seek to envisage God in terms of purely human categories and mundane terminology. These categories of knowledge and description have arisen out of the highly finite and restricted experience of mankind in dealing with earthly issues. That these categories are in any sense applicable to such considerations as arise in connection with God cannot in any sense be demonstrated. For example, since we have surrendered the old orthodox biblical views of God, it has come to be popular for Modernists to describe God by such phrases as the "First Cause" or "Absolute Energy" or "Original Essence."

It is obvious to any critically-minded person that such terms reveal at once their anthropocentric origins and limitations. We do not know that, with respect to the cosmos as a whole, there is any valid concept or category

such as time or priority. We observe that things happen in sequence here on earth and we have some evidence that certain crude mundane processes apparently have a beginning. Yet Einstein has shown rather conclusively that time and space are manifestations of energy. Even if we grant the reality of time in a cosmic sense, cosmic time is so extensive as to make the conception unusable by man. Likewise with cause. The notion of causation is a rudimentary human formulation. It was worked out in the time of Aristotle in a fashion much like that in which is today used by the theologians. We have already pointed out that contemporary physics and physical chemistry have proved that we can no longer demonstrate the fact of ultimate causation. Hence, if we cannot know that there is any such thing as "first" or "cause," it is rather difficult to interpret God as the "First Cause," even though we were to accept it as plausible that He is such. Likewise with the term "Absolute Energy." The term "absolute" means nothing determinate to man, but is an age old metaphysical escape from reality. The physicists have demonstrated that we are totally unaware of the nature of energy, even though we may indicate theoretically how it is generated in the atom. Therefore, any attempt to envisage God as "Absolute Energy" would appear to possess little precision and even less validity. The same with such a term as "Original Essence." What we have already said about the term "first" applies of course to its synonym "original." The term "essence" has already become a discarded historical curiosity of physical science. It would thus seem that the search for God, through the use of an instrument like the human mind, incapable of envisaging divinity, and compelled to make use of categories utterly unsuited to conceiving of matters on

a divine scale, is not likely to turn out at all successfully. In short, it is probably true, as one Advanced Modernist has suggested, that in contemporary perspective the very effort to search for God is so presumptuous as to savor of inherent sacrilege and impiety.

Some modern seekers after God have evaded entirely the considerations which we have raised above and have boldly proclaimed that we need but to look within ourselves in order to discover God. Such an attitude is obviously nothing more or less than a sophisticated rendition of the old anthropomorphic conception that we are made in the image of God. In the light of modern anthropology and psychology we may be sure that there is no possibility of discovering God in the personality of any human being. In the first place, man is singularly incapable of any very penetrating self-analysis. But even if he possessed supreme capacity along this line he could do nothing more than arrive at an understanding of the mental operations of the highest developed member of the animal kingdom living upon a petty little planet which is tearing along rapidly through astral space in the trail of its parent sun. It is difficult to imagine a more naïve and infantile notion than the suggestion that we may discover God through patient self-examination. It is but a preposterous compound of ignorance and arrogance. Others have stated that to find God we need but to look at Jesus and his life. Even reasonably respectable Modernists have defended this contention. We shall devote a chapter to a consideration of Jesus in the light of modern knowledge and will merely dismiss this suggestion in the present place by the summary statement that it is difficult to see much relationship between an inconspicuous and poorly informed religious teacher, moving about a relatively back-

ward economy two thousand years ago, and the "Administrator" of the cosmos which has been revealed to us by modern astronomy.

Other writers have attempted to formulate a defensible view of the cosmic God by practically identifying God with the cosmos. Such an effort can hardly be regarded as satisfactory. In the first place, it takes for granted that the cosmos implies the existence and direction of God. The writer is willing to concede that this may be true, but we have no means of demonstrating it to be a fact. In the second place, any such expedient really begs the whole question. The cosmos is unquestionably a mystery to man and when God is identified with cosmos both become equally mysterious. Other Modernists, such as Professor Edward Scribner Ames, have defined God as "idealized reality" and have identified reality with such principles as order, intelligence and love. Now these qualities of order, intelligence and love appeal to the writer quite as much as they could possibly attract Professor Ames. Yet we have no possible method of proving that such categories as order, intelligence and love have any ultimate cosmic validity whatever or are in any way associated with the nature and qualities of a cosmic Deity.

One of the most fundamental issues involved in the quest for God in the light of modern knowledge is that of the nature and validity of the whole God concept. The issue here is whether the nature of modern knowledge inevitably impels us to seek an "Administrator of the Cosmos" or whether the persistence and existence of earlier theistic views is what really leads us to attempt to reconstruct and rationalize them in the light of more recently acquired knowledge. It seems to the writer that if we are actually frank with ourselves we must admit that the quest for God is today carried on primarily, if not ex-

clusively, because of the existence of a belief in God handed down from earlier and more rudimentary cultures. It appears to the writer doubtful as to whether there would today be any widespread search for God if the belief in God had not grown up in primitive times and come down into our own age. In short, it seems to the writer that the cosmic theist is motivated, consciously or unconsciously, primarily by the desire to save an ancient tradition and to give intellectual respectability to an outgrown cultural concept. The writer does not, however, desire to press this point in dogmatic fashion, but he does insist upon the validity of raising the issue as to whether the whole God notion is compatible with a thoroughly contemporaneous outlook upon the facts and processes of physical nature. Certainly any attempt to envisage God in anthropocentric terms is today intellectually and culturally preposterous. Dr. John H. Dietrich has admirably expressed this point of view:[3]

> But some of us feel that even this [conception of God], especially when thus personalized by the cosmic theist, is an attempt to set up a greatly enlarged image of man himself, an attempt to interpret the life of the universe in terms of the life of man. And what right have we to measure life by our little experience? The earth shows it rising from the amœba to man, and in man rising from the savage who cannot count six to the sage who calculates the course of comets. The earth too is but an atom in an infinite space filled with larger worlds, as our air is filled with dust. With the rocks under us and the race around us showing such progress, and with the heavens shining above pointing to infinite possibilities, shall we even attempt to define that which embraces the totality of being in terms of our own experience? For man to suppose, therefore, that deity is like himself,—is personal, is conscious,—is about as wise as if the barnacles on a lone rock in mid-ocean should suppose that they represent the highest

[3] Dietrich, *How the Gods Were Made.*

possible existence, and that God is "altogether such a one" as themselves.

It were more rational and more reverent to adopt the attitude of the agnostic, and to say with Richard Hooker, "Our soundest knowledge of God is to know that we know him not, neither can know him; and our safest eloquence concerning him is our silence, when we confess without confession that his greatness is above our capacity and reach." Spinoza once said, "To define God is to deny him" and I believe that even to name him—the name circumscribed as it is with our petty conceptions—is suggestive of irreverence. I would heed the voice of deity as heard in a modern drama, "Never more name me! Nameless, I hold men ever, draw them ever on and on; and you are atheizing them with your kind stress about my name. Silence names me better than sound."

It would further seem to the writer that the attempts of certain Modernists like Dr. Fosdick and Professor Niebuhr to personify the cosmos cannot be readily defended in the light of our contemporary perspective. The human personality is a limited and humble product of this earth in recent times. There is nothing to indicate that the cosmos can be reduced to such terms or interpreted in such rubrics. Nor does the human personality require any such attitude toward the cosmos to insure its most perfect development.

We do not desire to be understood as discouraging man's quest for God. We are only concerned with making clear the nature and magnitude of the task in order that our search for the Deity may not be naïve or destructive to intellectual integrity. The quest for God is a noble venture, certainly much more lofty and commendable than the attempt to secure an additional million dollars or to attain a high political office. We cast no aspersions upon those who desire to carry on this type of cosmo-theological exploration. It will doubtless captivate many superior

intellects as long as man continues to exist on the earth. Manifestly, in so far as the quest for the new cosmic God helps on the abandonment of Yahweh, it will be a great gain for civilization and humanity.

The writer has been frequently accused by the pious brethren of attacking God. It will scarcely be necessary to devote much space to the refutation of this preposterous charge. No one can attack anything unless he possesses some knowledge of the existence and nature of the thing attacked. Holding as he does to the non-demonstrable nature of God and his existence, the author could neither logically nor sensibly attack God. Nor has he any inclination to attack God. He possesses as much cosmic reverence as any Fundamentalist—indeed, probably more, as he has a better knowledge of the cosmos. What he is attacking in this book and elsewhere are the primitive, false and obstructive conceptions of God which have evolved from man's ignorance and unbridled imagination in the past. If the charge is limited to accusation of attacking the validity of the Yahweh cult, then he admits the accuracy of the indictment and glories in his guilt.

It may be somewhat appropriate to comment briefly in the present place upon the three classic attitudes toward God which have evolved during the history of theological and philosophical speculation. These three attitudes are usually described as theism, agnosticism, and atheism. The theist is a person who vigorously affirms his certainty that God exists. While theism should be interpreted broadly enough to include the cosmic theist who might interpret God as First Cause, yet theism has normally been associated with a personal and paternal conception of the Deity. The definition of Robert Flint is perhaps closest to the normal views of the theist: "Theism is the doctrine that nature has a Creator and Preserver,

the nations a Governor, men a Heavenly Father and Judge." The agnostic refuses to commit himself to any definite conviction as to God's existence or non-existence. He is willing to concede the possibility of the existence of a deity, but contends that no sufficient body of cogent and convincing evidence has thus far been brought forward to demonstrate the actuality of God. The atheist, with a dogmatic assurance which matches that of the theist, declares his complete certainty that God does not exist. To the writer it seems quite obvious that the agnostic position is the only one which can be supported by any scientifically-minded and critically-inclined person in the present state of our knowledge. It appears to the writer equally preposterous to assume an air of finality with respect to either the existence or the non-existence of God.

In the light of these considerations we might well comment upon the quite unfair discrimination against the atheist in contemporary thought. We take it for granted that the theist, particularly of the Modernist variety, is a thoroughly respectable fellow who requires neither apology nor defense. On the other hand, we normally feel it desirable to offer some apology for the atheist. We think it is necessary, for example, to assure people that, in spite of his atheism, he is honest, pays his debts and assumes a kindly attitude towards his neighbors. If a college president has an atheist on his faculty he assumes an apologetic attitude and maintains that it is a proof of his open-mindedness that he allows such a man to continue on his faculty, even though he may be maintaining on the same faculty several hundred unabashed theists. To learn of the organization of an atheist society on a college campus produces no little excitement and criticism, while we take for granted the justice and propriety of maintaining Christian Associations and other religious organ-

izations in conjunction with nearly every college and university in the United States of America. Yet, the Christians would have as much logical difficulty in justifying their existence as would the organization of adolescent atheists. The writer believes that theists, agnostics and atheists should all be allowed to flourish without the slightest interference. He does contend, however, that if we are going to feel it essential to offer an apology for the man who does not believe in God, we should feel it equally in order to extend an apology for one who affirms a definite conviction of God's existence.

The growth of modern science has brought about a comparable transformation of our attitude towards mankind. In even so incomplete a cosmic perspective as man may attain, the earth immediately shrinks from the position of the largest and most important unit in the cosmos to a relatively insignificant and highly recent astral exhibit—a celestial juvenile and cosmic dwarf from every angle. It is, from the standpoint of time and space, certainly most inconsequential indeed. Man likewise tends to shrink in terms of the new cosmic outlook. Far from being "the lord of all creation," existing from the beginning of things, he now appears to be but a highly temporary chemical episode on a most petty planet. Astronomically speaking, man is almost totally negligible, while from the standpoint of his biological antiquity and continuity he is far outdistanced by the lowly cockroach which has remained substantially unchanged for more than fifty million years. These facts regarding the insignificance of the earth and man in the face of our modern views of the cosmos have been well stated by Professor Harlow Shapley:[4]

[4] Shapley, in New York *Nation*, May 7, 1924.

The thing that appals me is not the bigness of the universe, but the smallness of us. We are in all ways small—little in foresight, shriveled in spirit, minute in material content, microscopic in the vastness of measured space, evanescent in the sweep of time—inconsequential in every respect, except, perhaps, in the chemical complexities of our mental reactions. In that alone our advance may surpass that of other terrestrial organisms.

But the sanctity of all protoplasm has practically disappeared in this, the heroic age of the physical sciences, when knowledge of the material universe, its content, structure and dimensions, has so completely overthrown egocentrism. It should sufficiently deflate the organism, you would think, to find that his fountain of energy, the sun, is a dwarf star among thousands of millions of stars; to find that the star around which his little parasitic earth willessly plods is so far from the center of the known stellar universe that sunlight, with its incomprehensibly high velocity, cannot reach that center in a thousand generations of vain men.

The deflation, however, is not stopped at that point. We now reach much deeper into space than a few years ago, find millions of stars mightier than our sun, find greater velocities, larger masses, higher temperatures, longer durations than we have previously known. Even more illuminating, in this orientation of organisms in the physical universe, is the revelation that the earth, whose surface we infest, is not a parcel of grand antiquity. Rather recently, as astronomers now measure time, a singular incident happened in the life-history of the sun. Before that time the earth was not, nor were the animals of the earth. Nevertheless, for trillions of years, in the absence of the "Lords of all Creation," the stars had poured out their radiant energy, the celestial bodies had rolled on, law had governed the universe. Before that event, you and I, the material of our bodies, were electrons, and atoms in the solar atmosphere. Since then we have been associated with the inorganic and organic evolution of a smaller concern.

The earth, as I have intimated, appeared only a few thousand million years ago. Our sun, it seems, had already passed its prime of radiance when in its wanderings through celestial space it met up with another star—a stellar romance—

a marriage made in the heavens. From that affair—realistic astronomers call it an encounter—the planets of the sun were born. The passing star, ruffling up the exterior of the sun, detached some relatively small fragments of the solar atmosphere. Now we strut on one of the surviving fragments and wonder and speculate and discuss: "How can we better the world?" Crown of absurdities:—*we* repairing the world! That cast-off fragment, the ancestor from which and on which we descend, was composed wholly of gas! An emblem for us, that ancestral hot vapor—"How can we straighten out the world?"

The gaseous planet quickly liquefied as out in cold space it began its tireless revolutions around the parent sun. Soon after a crust formed, and we may thank our lucky stars, the distance from the sun was right, the atmospheric and crustal chemistry was right, and other adjustments of the physical environment happened to be suitable for an elaboration of chemical reactions. The energy of the overflowing sunlight aided in complexifying this protoplasmic chemistry, a green mold formed in spots on the planet, and here we are—parasites on the energy of the sun that cast us forth. How can we better the world?

Not only has modern astrophysics given us a novel and convincing demonstration of the cosmic insignificance and obscurity of mankind; it has also made it perfectly evident that man has no "cosmic companion" upon whom he can lean with assurance for direction, guidance and protection. Even if we were to grant the existence of a cosmic Deity, such a God would be too majestic, vague, remote and impersonal to make possible the assumption of His direct and immediate solicitude for such an indescribably unimportant and ephemeral item in the cosmos as *homo sapiens.* These two notions of man's cosmic insignificance and the absence of any immediate personal cosmic companion represent a contribution of great dynamic and constructive importance for human society. If man is insignificant and obscure in cosmic perspective,

he is omnipotent for the time being when viewed in relation to the planet which he inhabits. Further, considerations such as these demonstrate the extreme significance of this earth and the human race for mankind. The new cosmic perspective reveals definitively to man his incapacity to affect or influence the physical universe beyond this particular planet. In other words, this new vision of the vast cosmos has the result of turning our practical interest back again upon our own petty little planet with a thoroughness and completeness unmatched in any earlier generation. Whatever astrophysics may reveal in regard to the magnitude and complexity of the cosmos, this revelation is of no significance except in relation to intellectual speculation and the reaction of this upon human conduct. Man can no longer expect to learn anything important with respect to his immediate destiny from an observation of the heavens. Neither may he hope to be able to modify the effect of the heavenly bodies upon the earth and man. Though we may be pathetically dependent upon factors coming to us from outside the earth, such as sunlight, cosmic rays and the like, man can do nothing whatever to control or direct such external forces and influences. The sun, for example, will maintain the periodicity of its sun-spot frequency, with its resulting effects upon storm frequency on this planet, in spite of anything which man can do.

Therefore the chief practical result of contemporary astrophysics is to concentrate human interest upon our planet and to emphasize the all-absorbing importance of mankind upon the earth. The writer has been frequently accused of concentrating his attention too much upon the recent astronomical assessment of the heavens, with the result that he has ignored the importance of man. As an actual matter of fact, the writer has been

chiefly concerned with an analysis of astrophysics primarily because such an exercise is the best possible means of demonstrating the absorbing practical significance of the earth and man for mankind. Far from leading us away from humanism, astrophysics brings us back to humanism with a vengeance and leaves us with it for all time,—or at least as long as mankind shall continue to exist. This new perspective also makes it forever plain that the great problem of man is not to adjust himself to the cosmos—a grotesque and meaningless proposition—but rather to adjust himself to the physical environment, material culture and his fellow-men.

The evolutionary biological conceptions and the social sciences are as disruptive of the accepted views of man as they are of the older theological attitude toward God. According to the accepted biblical theory, man was a theological entity and not a unit of bio-chemical behavior. He was important chiefly as the custodian of an immortal soul, for which his fleshly being merely served as the temporary envelope, pending the earthly experiment which determined the ultimate destiny of each individual soul. In the more optimistic passages of Holy Writ man was defined as only a little lower than the angels, while in the abject strains he was viewed as but a worm of the dust. The scientific facts reveal man as neither a worm nor an angel with pruned wings. He is the leading member of the simian group and, therefore, the dominant element for the time being in the animal kingdom.

This view of man as an animal has been extremely repellent to many of the more pious and conventional brethren, but there is little rational ground for such an attitude, once it is understood what one really means by the inclusion of man in the animal kingdom. When one views the situation with a scientific and common-sense at-

titude, one recognizes that the animal kingdom represents the highest order of life on the planet; that is, the highest level of organic development known to man. Therefore, to be the temporary leader of the animal world is the highest form of achievement to which man could possibly pretend, and this title is the superlative praise which can possibly be bestowed upon *homo sapiens*. The older theological conception that man is only a little lower than the angels or is made in the image of God may be more flattering in a certain way, but it is not consistent with modern scientific knowledge, and must be discarded along with other illusions of a primitive derivation.

Further, not only is the conception that man is an animal a demonstrated fact in no way humiliating to the human race; it also has much more of practical significance. Even if it were known to be true that we are slightly mitigated angels, this would afford no clue for the study of mankind, because no one has seen an angel and we possess no knowledge of the personal traits and behavior-patterns of the angelic host. On the other hand, once we come to recognize the fact that man is an animal, we immediately have the rich fields of comparative anatomy, physiology and psychology to draw upon. From these we may build a solid approach to the study of human nature and behavior. These branches of science reveal man as a super-simian, and the study of simian psychology, as summarized in such books as those by Kohts, Köhler and Yerkes, affords more in the way of a key to human behavior than all the material on theology ever compiled from the days of primitive folk-lore to the most abstruse apologetic manual of a contemporary professor of systematic theology. Even a humorous and avowedly trivial little book like Clarence Day's *This Simian World* will tell one more relevant and cogent things about human

nature than all the ponderous tomes of an Aquinas or the collected sermons of a dozen Moodys, Talmages or Spurgeons. Indeed, it may be held that none of the doctrines contained in any or all holy books which touch upon human conduct have any practical significance other than their curious and historical import. They may be regarded as interesting from an anthropological and historical point of view, but they cannot be viewed as in any sense safe and competent sources of guidance for human conduct.

What has been said above constitutes a devastating critique of the assertion of certain writers, among them the scientific reconciler, Professor Kirtley F. Mather. He contends that religion is essential to ethics, in that it enables us to be "something more than ourselves," while scientific ethics admittedly can aid us only to make the most of ourselves. Professor Mather contends that science can make us efficient only in human terms and says that the best which science can do would be to make us competent in a manner after the bees and ants. All that is necessary to show the absurdity of this position is simply to ask Professor Mather or anyone else to describe precisely just what is implied in this conception of man's being *more than man* and how a scientifically-minded person can conceive of such an achievement. We further submit that it is quite enough of a problem to make it possible for man to make the most of himself. Thus far religion has mainly succeeded in preventing us from realizing to the full our latent possibilities. No future religion, however secular and sensible, can hope to achieve more than to assist science in enabling man to live the best possible life open to a human being. The way to the practical improvement of human conduct is not to be found in an imaginative study of the possible conduct of a hypothetical God, but

in a scientific examination of the ultimate limits of human behavior and in a consideration of ways and means of enabling man to exploit to the highest possible degree his potential capacities. Religion can never do more than to inspire man to be the best possible type of man. Further, the slur on the bees and ants will scarcely stand examination, as one will discover from reading such a book on the subject as R. W. G. Hingston's *Instinct and Intelligence.*

Biology, anthropology and archeology have given us a completely revolutionized picture of the arrival of man on the planet and of the development of human culture. Biology has indicated man's affinity with other members of the animal kingdom and has proved his derivation from earlier forms of animal life. Physical anthropology has traced the evolution of human types during the several million years in which man has already existed upon the planet. It has shown that man in his present form—*homo sapiens*—had evolved at least thirty-five or forty thousand years ago and has not been notably modified physically or mentally since that time. Cultural anthropology and archeology have traced the gradual evolution of human culture, including religion, from their most rudimentary primitive forms of expression. In order that we may make clear the contrast between the results achieved by these lines of investigation and the traditional view of the origin of man and human culture as set forth in the Bible, we shall summarize briefly the state of human development which had been reached by the year 4004 B.C., the date assigned in the Bible for the creation of the earth and its animal and human inhabitants.

In the first place, the modern races of man had made their appearance throughout the western world, and all the basic psycho-physical characteristics and behavior-

traits of man had become established, to remain relatively unchanged until the readjustments forced by the rise of modern metropolitan society since the Industrial Revolution. As Europe and the Near East were inhabited by hundreds of thousands of aspiring human beings before 4004 B.C., it is evident that the old question as to where Cain could have found a wife about 3950 B.C. presents no serious problem!

All the major forms of technical achievement which were devised down to the Industrial Revolution had been mastered by this time, excepting only the art of navigation of large bodies of water, the technique of metal-working, and printing. The economic advances included hunting and fishing, the domestication of animals and the resulting pastoral industries, the origins of agriculture, the rise of the textile industry, and the development of pottery. Remarkable achievements had been made in varied fields of art. Settled and permanent forms of life had been attained. Elaborate artificial habitats had been erected. Extensive forms of coöperative enterprise had been achieved, and many basic forms of social organization had been worked out. The art of verbal communication was elaborately developed in its oral form, and the crude beginnings of picture writing, which were to lead to the alphabet, had already been executed. The preliterary age was all but at an end.

Property rights were well developed and elaborately protected by primitive custom and usage. Complex economic institutions and processes, including the extensive exchange of commodities, the division of labor, and the specialization of industrial enterprise, had already been worked out. A recognition of the supernatural world and of man's implied relations to it had led to the origins of religion in the Middle Paleolithic and to the development

of elaborate religious rites and exercises before the close of the Neolithic period. The tremendous expenditure of human energy upon the great stone monuments of the Megalithic period testifies to the dynamic force of religion at this early date. As early as 4241 B.C., some two hundred and thirty-seven years before Adam was fashioned out of the dust of the earth, there had been a sufficient development of mathematical and astronomical science so that man could work out a solar calendar of three hundred and sixty-five days to the year.

In other words, by 4004 B.C. the major outlines of material culture had attained to about the level of development at which they remained until the Industrial Revolution some six thousand years later. While there were enormous advances in æsthetic life, science, literature, and government in the intervening period, the material culture of humanity made no striking progress between Adam and Adam Smith. The long and dreary march of mankind from the bestial condition of the Eolithic period had at last brought the race, after a half million or more years, to the so-called "dawn of history" and the origins of civilization.

The implications of the modern scientific view in regard to man necessitate a reconstruction of our traditional conceptions of the good life. Our judgments must be entirely mundane and pragmatic. The good life for man is the best possible life for him here and now. It is the good life from the standpoint of man's interests and capacities. We need have no direct consideration for the views of the "Administrator of the Cosmos" in this matter. In the first place, there is no possible manner of discovering the desires of the Administrator of the Cosmos with regard to the good life for man. In the second place, we may assume that we are most likely to please the Administrator of

the Cosmos by making the best possible use of the capacities with which he may have endowed us. In short, from man's viewpoint there is no good but human desires and their ever more perfect satisfaction. We recognize, of course the possibility of learning more and more about human desires and of attaining ever better and more adequate ways of expressing and satisfying them.

The implications of the above for sociology and ethics are very great and far-reaching indeed. They come down to this, namely, that the type of behavior and institutions which are best suited to advance human happiness and efficiency must be sought and constructed in conformity with the needs of a species of super-simians temporarily inhabiting divers types of geographic environments. Morals can no longer be intelligently discussed in relation to the type of conduct befitting a mystically interpreted theological entity aiming to secure the safe translation of his hypothetical, metaphysical soul into a supposititious, eternal, spiritual world. This need not be taken to mean that man must or should dispense with religion, but if he is to retain a religion which will have permanent social value it must be a reconstructed religion, worked out in harmony with our present knowledge of the nature and requirements of man in secular social situations.

If these conclusions regarding the desirability of an exclusively secular outlook are correct, then the practical and detailed guidance to the achievement of the "good life" must be sought in the sciences of nature and of man and not in supernatural revelation or theological dogmas. If we are to know what is good for man as an animal we must turn to the sciences of chemistry, physiology and biology, which indicate the processes and requirements of his physical nature. We must study psychology and psychiatry to comprehend the processes involved in man's

behavior in association with other bio-chemical entities, like unto himself in general pattern, but often differing markedly in specific hereditary dispositions and acquired complexes. The social sciences must be appealed to in order to understand the nature of the social institutions that condition the individual behavior and group activities of man. We must not only know what institutions are likely to prove most beneficial to the human animal but also how institutions develop, change and control humanity. Then we must especially cultivate æsthetics to discover what ranges of human interests and achievements may be opened up beyond the essential satisfaction of his bio-chemical needs and the realization of his material well-being.

Two things, then, are perhaps most conspicuous about the sources of guidance for the "good life" in terms of a contemporaneous view of things: (1) the multiplicity of those secular sciences and fields of endeavor which must be drawn upon, and (2) the total irrelevance of the theologian in this process. The theologian, in the modern scheme of things, has no more propriety in morals and æsthetics than in engineering or physical chemistry. The Bible, as such, need not be approached with any more reverential awe respecting its injunctions with regard to human conduct than we might bring to it when exploiting it in studying the history of medicine or cosmology. If the Ten Commandments are to be obeyed today, it can only be when their precepts and advice may be proved to square with the best natural and social science of the present time. They must be subjected to the same objective scientific scrutiny as that to which we would submit the cosmology of Genesis or the medical views in Leviticus.

III. EXCAVATING THE FOSSILS OF RELIGIOUS ORTHODOXY

In the preceding chapter we summarized the nature of the leading cultural fossils in the religious complex of orthodoxy, such as the conception of the soul, immortality, sin, spiritual things, prayer and the notion of the sacred. We shall here endeavor to indicate the fate of these fossils when subjected to scrutiny in the light of even the rudiments of modern scientific knowledge.[5] Modern physiology, physiological chemistry and psychology completely dispose of the old theological superstition of the soul as the mysterious metaphysical entity which gives life and intelligence to human beings. The traditional theologian may retort that the scientists cannot create life. It may be answered that the scientists appear to be making rapid progress toward a solution of this hitherto baffling task. Yet the present inability of the scientist to create life is in itself no proof whatever of the existence of the soul. If the scientist has never been able to create life, it is likewise true that the theologian has never been able to isolate or reveal a soul. Even if science has not been able as yet actually to create life, it has been successful in demonstrating that life and death are nothing more or less than physico-chemical states.

Neither life nor death can possibly be explained by the hypothesis of the soul, as understood in traditional theology. In the first place, life and death are phenomena common to both man and the animals, and there appears to be no fundamental difference between the processes of life in the higher animals and in man. The differences be-

[5] For an unusually amiable Catholic defense of the "fossils" see the article by Father Francis Augustine Walsh in *The Commonweal* for May 29, 1929.

tween man and the higher animals are chiefly those connected with man's superior intelligence and seem to have no direct relationship to the nature of life processes. The same physico-chemical processes apparently go on in an ape or a dog that take place in mankind. Yet no theologian has ever contended that any of the animals below man possesses a soul, though they manifest the processes of life as much as man. At best, the theologian could only contend that the soul may explain the superior intelligence of man. This contention, however, we know to be both needless and unintelligible. The superior intelligence of man is due to his larger and more complexly organized brain and nervous system.

Further, if we limit ourselves solely to considerations relating to man we can easily show the preposterous nature of the hypothesis of the soul. In the first place, we should have the problem of just when the soul possesses man. Does it enter at the time of conception, during pregnancy, at birth, in infancy or in adolescence? If the soul is held to furnish the explanation of the traits of the individual, then it is obvious that the soul would have to enter at the very moment of conception, for modern science has shown that the inherited traits of the individual are irrevocably determined at the moment of fertilization and can only be modified by serious and unusual accidents to the fœtus or infant. Those influences which shape the personality after birth are certainly not the product of the soul, but rather of the conditioning to which the individual is subjected in his social experience. Yet the soul can be interpreted as the determiner of specific individual traits only by identifying it with the *gene* of the modern geneticist, which has been shown to be the actual determiner of the inherent traits which the individual brings with him into the world at the time of

birth. The tremendous influence of the social environment upon the individual in the process of conditioning our responses, which has been indicated by Pavlov, Watson and others, is also highly damaging to the notion of a soul which gives to the individual at birth definite, fixed, and immutable traits. Individuals have been rather completely transformed through the process of education or re-education. One might further inquire as to what happens to the soul in the case of a successful psychoanalysis, during which process the personality of the individual is profoundly and deeply modified.

Death, likewise, raises many insuperable objections to the theory of the soul. The traditionalists contend that death comes to the individual when the soul packs its baggage and definitely abandons its former fleshly envelope. If one were to accept the hypothesis of the soul in explaining cases of death or near death, a number of interesting questions immediately arise. One might inquire as to the conditions and operations of the soul of a person in a case of near drowning where the individual would most certainly have died except for subjection to exercises of resuscitation. Does the soul abandon the body when death seems imminent and does it return when resuscitation gives some faint evidence of success? Likewise, let us take the case of a person who is apparently dying as result of the shock of a severe operation and is revived and saved as result of the use of the pulmotor or the administration of some powerful drug like pituitrin. Does the soul remain in the body or has it already begun its celestial flight before restorative measures were undertaken? What is the state of the soul during the period in which people frequently lie in a coma at the point of death for days or weeks at a time? Why does the soul leave the body more rapidly under certain conditions of

death than under other and different circumstances of decease? Why, for example, does the soul beat a hasty and precipitate exit from the body upon the introduction of cyanide of potassium and linger on in ill-humor for days after the administration of bichloride of mercury? It has frequently been held that the test of the presence of the soul is the beating of the heart. Yet we have a number of instances where the heart has actually stopped beating but has been induced to resume through chemical stimulation and external manipulation. In cases such as these, what was the behavior of the soul? These concrete instances, indicating the intellectual confusion and bankruptcy of the soul notion, should be sufficient to make clear the preposterous notion of this archaic hypothesis, but, as usual, history remains the best solvent for superstition. Once we turn to a study of the past and ascertain just how man developed this notion of the soul in the *milieu* of primitive ignorance and superstition, all necessity for even momentary consideration of this ancient illusion immediately disappears.

There have been efforts made by rationalistically inclined writers to salvage the conception of the soul through redefining it in such a manner as to give it a meaning altogether different from that which it possesses in traditional theology. Some such writers have identified the soul with a vivid sense of sympathy and have held that a soulful person is one who is unusually sympathetic, charitable and sociable. The writer can see no justification whatever for any such procedure. There is no reason why we cannot designate sympathy as sympathy and call a sympathetic person by the right name. To call a sympathetic man a soulful person is comparable to calling a man of insight an astrologer. Again, we discover modern writers identifying the conception of soul with the possession of certain

specific qualities. For instance, in his *Experience and Nature* we find John Dewey writing:

> . "Soul" when freed from all traces of traditional materialistic animism denotes the qualities of psycho-physical activities as far as these are organized into unity. Some bodies have souls preëminently as some conspicuously have fragrance, color and solidity. To make this statement is to call attention to properties that characterize these bodies, not to import a mysterious non-natural entity or force. . . . To say emphatically of a particular person that he has soul or a great soul is not to utter a platitude, applicable equally to all human beings. It expresses the conviction that the man or woman in question has in marked degree qualities of sensitive, rich and coördinated participation in all the situations of life.

All this seems to the writer to mean simply that when the term soul is "freed from all traces of traditional materialistic animism" it ceases to be a soul. Certainly a man of Professor Dewey's intellectual originality and ingenuity does not need to have recourse to primitive conceptions in order to envisage and define vivid, distinctive and dynamic qualities. For purposes of historical accuracy and clear thinking it is best to retain the original definition of soul and to recognize that it has now become an indefensible anachronism.

With the disappearance of the soul from civilized terminology there must go the related conception of the immortality of the soul. The notion of the soul and personal immortality can in no sense be harmonized with modern chemistry, physiology and psychology. The soul idea implies that the traits of man which make up his personality are brought about by the entrance of this mysterious metaphysical entity called the soul. Bodily endowment and processes and the interaction between man and his environment have, according to this view, nothing to do with the

fundamental delineation of the personality. Accepting these premises, it was plausible to maintain that the personality could leave the body at death in the form of the invisible soul and go on existing eternally without any corporeal or physical basis. Any such notion as this is nothing short of preposterous in the light of the most elementary psychology. If it were offered in any field other than religion it would be subjected to even vulgar ridicule. We now know that the human personality at any time is the resultant of the conditioning to which our innate equipment at birth has been subjected in the process of living. It is a highly complicated matter, involving the whole course of life from fertilization to any given moment in a person's career. In the functioning of personality we have two basic factors: (1) the highly organized physical equipment which we know of as the human body; (2) the stimuli from the outside environment, both physical and social, to which the body is exposed. The body is also stimulated in various physico-chemical ways by the processes going on within us. It responds to stimulation from both within and without, this response to stimulation constituting the mechanism of life. For the personality to function, then, we must have in active operation these processes of stimulation and response.

When the physico-chemical change known as death sets in, neither stimulation nor response can continue. The body is no longer able to receive stimuli from within or from without, and it is equally incapable of manifesting any response. In other words, the personality ceases to exist, and by no stretch of the imagination can we rationally conceive of the personality persisting without any physical basis. The whole set of operations which go on in the brain and nervous system during the processes involved in human thinking and emotional activities depends absolutely

upon a highly complicated physical mechanism and could not in any way take place when this bodily machinery ceases to function. It may well be that our neurological equipment is not the whole of personality, but it is absolutely certain that personality can neither exist nor function except in coöperation with, and on the basis of, our brain and nervous system. Therefore, it would seem that, in spite of any vagaries and wishful-thinking of the psychic researchers, modern psychology completely discredits any such notion as that of the immortality of the soul or the continued existence of the human personality after death. We are perfectly aware that there are several eminent psychologists who have espoused psychic research and defended spiritualism. Yet to the degree to which they have accepted the premises of spiritualism, to this extent have they ceased to be psychologists and have become mystics and wishful-thinkers. Yet there is no particular reason why we should oppose continued work on the part of the psychic researchers. It certainly represents a relatively harmless type of amusement and pseudo-scientific expression.

In the light of modern knowledge, the only types of immortality to which man may legitimately aspire are biological immortality and the immortality of his earthly achievements. A man may pass on his germ-plasm to descendants and thus secure at least a temporary physical immortality. Or he may execute achievements in some line of endeavor which posterity deems sufficiently significant to preserve and commemorate. One may also influence other personalities in an indelible fashion, and in this way leave a temporary impress of his personality after death, provided those whom he has thus influenced survive him. Beyond this, no reasonable person will entertain any hope of immortality.

While many may regret the passing of the conception of immortality, it is difficult to see how any reasonable person can bewail the elimination of this gloomy illusion. The historic conceptions of immortality have certainly been far from attractive. The Jewish and pagan conceptions of immortality presented a very unattractive eternity, rather less pleasant on the whole than complete extinction. The Persian notion of heaven and hell, which was adopted by the later Jews and Christians was, on the whole, a most depressing if not terrible prospect to contemplate. Even heaven, if literally interpreted, would have proved unspeakably monotonous after the first month's residence. The Christians, however, freely conceded that many more would find their way into hell than would ever pass through the portals of heaven. The prospect of hell awaiting the majority of the human race is unquestionably the most horrible doctrine which has ever received any general acceptance in the course of human history.

The surrender of the notion of immortality also presents much of practical significance. It involves the complete transformation of our sense of life objectives. In the past the chief purpose of life has been to prepare to die successfully, namely, to be saved in the world to come. This offered little possibility of a rational concentration upon the problems of how to live richly and adequately. Centuries ago Montaigne suggested that the supreme purpose of human learning ought to be to teach us how to live happily rather than how to die safely, but there could be no hope of any practical realization of Montaigne's suggestion as long as the Christian view of immortality persisted in vivid form. As soon as we cease to expect an immortal existence after death, just so soon can we begin a legitimate concentration upon the problems connected with making this life ever more full, rich and satisfactory.

Not only does the destruction of crude supernaturalism make life more rational in aim and purpose and richer in content, but it also makes death easier to contemplate. For the first time we can actually inquire with complacency "O death, where is thy sting?" Could anything be more satisfying as the ultimate reward of activity than the state of complete extinction to be realized in the chemical condition known as death? If it be alleged that it cruelly puts an end to earthly ties and relationships, it can be countered that this is not always unmitigatedly tragic, and that, anyhow, the orthodox Christian heaven was not a place primarily designed to promote family reunions or to consummate unrealized earthly romances.

We need not pause long to demonstrate that the old notions of heaven and hell disappear along with the myth of the soul and the illusion of immortality. If there is no soul, and if the conception of the persistence of the personality after death is entirely untenable, it should be evident that nothing remains to find its way into heaven or hell, even granting the existence of these hypothetical entities. We have already shown how modern astrophysics has erased the old theological conceptions of heaven or the heavens, as well as the related views of purgatory and hell. Present cosmic distances also rule out the plausibility of the movement of the soul to heaven or hell. Suppose for example we hypothetically locate hell and heaven relatively close to the earth, as far as cosmic distances go. In the old theology hell was placed at the center of the universe, namely, the center of the earth. If in the new cosmic perspective we were to locate hell at the center of our galactic system it would take the soul fifty thousand years, traveling at the speed of light, namely, 186,000 miles per second, to reach this spot. In the old theology heaven was located beyond the fixed and visible stars. If, in the new

notions of the sidereal universe, we were to locate heaven just outside our galactic system it would take the soul at least 100,000 years to pass the boundary of the Milky Way at the spot least remote from the earth. As with the soul and the doctrine of immortality, however, the best possible reason for relinquishing the belief in heaven and hell is to be found in the realization of the source of this human conviction. We now know, as we have pointed out several times, that we developed this Christian notion from the ancient Persian theology. Therefore, there is no more reason to continue according respect to the heaven-hell complex than to any other aspect of the ancient Persian folklore. Of course, any part of the antique Persian mythology may be true, but we may certainly demand as convincing demonstration for the existence of heaven and hell as we would for the allegation that Zoroaster was born of a virgin.

Many have held that we should maintain our notions of heaven and hell on the basis of what is known as the theory of compensation. Some persons seem to flourish and live a very happy life in spite of much wickedness, as judged by conventional standards. On the other hand, the most virtuous and socially-minded of men may encounter an unbroken series of disasters and unmitigated ill-luck. According to the compensatory theory, we cannot maintain social morâle or a belief in cosmic justice unless we can envisage a hell for the first type of person and a heaven for the second. This compensatory doctrine, however, either ignores or defies the modern scientific conception of human conduct which insists upon the complete determination of human behavior through the joint influence of our original equipment and our social experience. In the light of this attitude the criminal is no more responsible for his acts than the philanthropist. We may deplore wickedness,

at least when we mean by wickedness disastrous social acts, but to desire to send a man to hell as a punishment for wickedness is to imply a complete misunderstanding of the nature of human behavior. The compensatory justification of heaven and hell could only be taken seriously when man believed in the now discarded notion of free-will.

The new cosmic perspective, biblical criticism and social science rule out of civilized nomenclature one of the basic categories of all religious and metaphysical morality, namely sin. One can certainly admit the existence of immorality and crime, which are purely social and secular conceptions and imply a violation of the social codes. They are by definition socially harmful acts. Sin is, however, in an entirely different category. It is a theological rather than a sociological concept. It is by technical definition a transgression of the laws of God—a wilful and direct affront to God and a violation of his explicitly revealed will. Now modern knowledge has shown it to be difficult to prove the very existence of God, and even more of a problem to show any direct solicitude of God for our petty and ephemeral planet. Biblical criticism, the history of religions and cultural history have revealed the fact that we can in no direct and literal sense look upon the Bible or any other existing holy book as embodying the revealed will of God. Consequently, if we do not and cannot discover the nature of the will of God in regard to human behavior, we cannot very well know when we are violating it. In other words, sin is scientifically undefinable and unknowable. Hence, sin goes into the limbo of ancient superstitions such as witchcraft and sacrifice. It will, of course, be conceded that many acts hitherto branded as sinful may be socially harmful, but such action should be scientifically rechristened as immoral or criminal, and we should as

rapidly as possible dispense with such an anachronistic term as "sin" even in popular phraseology.

The sense of sin has been one of the great by-products of religion. It has been looked upon as one of the main proofs of God's existence and of His direct contact with mankind. The most conspicuous claim of religion, next to insuring eternal salvation, has been its pretensions to power to convince man of his sinful and unworthy nature and to offer relief from this horrible state of mind.

Modern psychology has, however, disposed of the mystery of the sense of sin as decisively as the new astrophysics and other phases of modern knowledge have undermined the whole conception of sin. In the third chapter of this work we dealt with the problem of the nature and genesis of the religious thrill. We there included an extensive quotation from Everett Dean Martin's valuable work in which he made it plain that the sense of sin is almost exclusively a product of the psychological experiences peculiar to adolescence. Up-to-date psychologists who have studied the problem of sin and conversion have brought forth overwhelming evidence to support the theory that the sense of sin is inseparably connected with the inferiority-complex and adolescent psychology. In their writings Martin, Starbuck, Freud, Swisher, Rabbi Sacks and others have devoted particular attention to the psychological origins of the sense of sin in adolescent reactions. Dr. Dietrich has put in straight-forward language this scientific attitude towards the sense of sin in the following quotation:[6]

> The psychologists have shown us how the feeling of general sinfulness comes about through some new vision which has broken upon an individual's consciousness of what holy living means. When one catches a vision of great personal

[6] Dietrich, *The Superstition of Sin.*

superiority in another, the reflex feeling he is bound to experience is that of corresponding inferiority in himself. Thus when one grasps the beauty of Jesus' life as usually portrayed, he immediately feels his own unworthiness. Let such a new ideal come into the consciousness of a person, and instantly he begins to feel that some kinds of behavior which he had before felt to be innocent are now sinful; and this feeling is retroactive, laying a more or less rigorous hand upon all of the individual's experiences from his moment of enlightenment back to his childhood. Thus Augustine in his *Confessions* harks back to the heinous sins of his childhood, painting in somber colors the stealing of some fruit by a gang of boys of which he was a member. The terrible sins of his childhood which Augustine after his conversion so deeply deplored, were nothing more than the usual pranks which abound in lively boys; and so they had probably seemed to himself before this new burst of idealism.

Such experience usually comes in the period of adolescence, and that is why the conviction of sin is considered by psychologists as an adolescent phenomenon. Dr. Starbuck makes an exhaustive study of conversion, and finds that the greatest number occur between the ages of thirteen and twenty, and all those that come later are cases of postponed or revived adolescence. He finds that the central fact in the mental crisis of puberty is "the sense of sin" and that all other conditions are various manifestations of this, and that this feeling of sinfulness has practically no relation to actual wrongdoing. It is the result rather of a feeling of incompleteness, of unworthiness in contrast to the visionary dreams of this period of youth. That is why he speaks of it as a "distinctively adolescent phenomenon." Now the church has capitalized and exploited this fact. Instead of carefully leading the youth through this delicate and disturbed period, by helping him to evaluate his visions properly, to understand the relation between the ideal and the real, and bring his life to as high a standard as he is capable, it emphasized and exaggerated the feeling itself, clothed it with a sacred significance, deplored it as a human frailty, and taught that only its ministrations could bring release from this terrible burden of guilt.

Not only are genuine religious experiences and conversions a product of adolescent psychological reactions, but many so-called conversions do not represent any religious experience at all. In his *Up From Methodism* Mr. Herbert Asbury thus describes his own conversion and indicates how it was a joint product of evangelistic bull-dozing and the hysteria produced by the typical religious music dispensed upon such occasions:[7]

The church was crowded on the night I was told that Jesus had taken possession of my soul. I sat about the middle of the center section with my elder brother, a phlegmatic boy who was also converted but who would never talk much about it, while across the aisle were my sister and younger brother. Every few moments the evangelist would stop shouting and sink back into his chair, gasping, wiping his brow and breaking into sobs as he bowed his head in a prayer that came in a throaty mumble from his lips. Here and there throughout the house was an echoing gasp and a strangled sob, utterances of tortured and frightened souls about to be swirled into a great wave of religious frenzy. And standing in the aisle and about the pulpit were Brothers and Sisters, experienced revival workers, eager retrievers for the Lord, their faces flushed with emotion and their eagle eyes roving the congregation in quest of just such persons.

The instant the evangelist sat down, his band leader popped up like a trained seal, and from the band and the augmented choir poured the lilting measures of a hymn.

Oh, that will be
Glory for me!
Glory for me,
Yes, glory for me!
  When by His grace
  I shall look on His face,
That will be glory,
Yes, glory for me!

. . .

[7] Asbury, *op. cit.*, pp. 102 ff.

I was fair game for them. There was hardly anybody in the church who did not know how emotional and how excitable I was, and how music affected me. Why, I used to be thrilled over the way I myself played the violin, and have been known to hang entranced over a tune of my own composition! Even before the services began I saw that many of the Brothers and Sisters had spotted me and were only waiting the proper moment to pounce upon me, and when the call for converts came as many of them as could get near me pleaded and begged and cajoled; they scrambled and almost fought in their eagerness to ensnare such a prime morsel for the Lord. They could have worked no more furiously if God had been keeping the score. They screeched at me that now was the time to see Jesus, that God was waiting impatiently for me to be converted.

Some of them even threatened. They painted horrible pictures of Hell; they told me that unless I went down the aisle and confessed my sins and asked God to forgive me I would sizzle and burn and scorch forevermore. One old woman, her face working with fanatical fury, screamed at me that I was holding up the salvation of my whole family; that my father and my mother and my sisters and brothers would not go to Heaven unless I professed religion; she shouted that Satan was waiting outside the church to lead me into the depths of Hell and light a fire under my immortal soul. The whole crew pushed and tugged and hauled at me; one Brother got hold of my arm and tried to drag me into the aisle, yelling "Come to Jesus! Jesus is calling for you!"

And up on the platform Brother McConnell was rampaging to and fro, working himself into a frenzy, shouting that "Jesus wants you!" and above the roar of the Christian workers and the moans of the victims rose the wailing whine of a violin played off key, the thunder of the organ and the emotion-filled voices of the choir.

"Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in thee!"

By this time I was crying; I did not want to go to Hell, and I was horribly afraid of the Devil, and I was not old enough to realize what was being done to me. Yet some-

thing kept telling me that I should not do this thing; that it was all a mockery and a fraud. I know now, and I knew soon after that night, that the music was what was the matter with me, not religion. I did not see Jesus, and I never have. It was that slow music; that doleful, wailing chant of the hymns. I couldn't withstand it. I never could. In the army I used to go to all the funerals because I got such a terrific kick out of the funeral march and the sliding tramp of troops marching at half-step.

But I was doomed. It was in the cards that my self-respect was to be stripped from me and that I was to be emotionally butchered to make a religious holiday. They dragged and hauled at me until I was in the aisle, and then they got behind me and urged me forward. One old woman leaped ahead of us and performed a war dance that would have done credit to a frenzied worshipper of Voodoo. And as she pranced and cavorted she screamed:

"A bad boy is coming to Jesus!"

Others were going down too, shepherded by the hard-working Brothers and Sisters, and as they reached the bench Brother McConnell reached forward and grabbed their hands. For each one he shouted "Praise the Lord! Another sinner come to Jesus!" and then he gave the sinner an expert shove that catapaulted him into the hands of a waiting Brother who immediately knelt with him and prayed. The team work was magnificent. I tried to hang back, but the band began playing again. The thunderous cadences of "Nearer, My God, to Thee," pealed from the organ, and I couldn't stand it. I was being torn to pieces emotionally, and I staggered and stumbled down the aisle, sobbing, hardly able to stand. They thought it was religion, and the Brothers and Sisters who were pushing and shoving me shouted ecstatically that God had me; it was obvious that I was suffering, and suffering has always been accepted as a true sign of holiness.

But it was not God and it was not religion. It was the music. Behind me came my brother, sedately, as he always did things. He went calmly to join the godly; for him there was no pushing and no pulling; when he saw me being dragged into the aisle he simply got to his feet and followed. I have

always suspected that he went along merely to take care of me; frequently he did that. . . .

Brother McConnell grabbed my hand and shook it clammily when I reached the mourners' bench, and I was shoved into a seat. Immediately a Brother plopped down beside me, an old man whom I had known all my life, and who I knew perfectly well was an old skinflint and a hypocrite, a Sunday Christian. He put his arm around my shoulders and began to pray, crying down my neck and shouting that another soul had been saved, calling on the Lord to witness the good work that he was doing. I half expected him to say: "Give me credit, God; give me credit!" And all the time I was wishing to God that the band would stop playing; my nerves were being shattered by the constant and steady beat of the hymns, and the penetrating wail of the violin and the thunder of the organ.

And at last it did stop. There was silence in the church, except that here and there someone was writhing and moaning. But the shouting had ceased. Brother McConnell had his benches full, all of his workers had each a convert to work upon, and he decided to call it a day and save whatever sinners remained in the congregation for another night. So printed cards were passed around, which we were to sign, indicating the church we would join. Then the evangelist said for all of us who had been baptized to sit down.

With no music to upset me I began to think, and the more I thought, the angrier I got. I was ashamed; I boiled with fury and I wanted to smash the Brothers and Sisters in their smug faces. But I was just a boy and I was afraid.

The writer can testify to many conversions of his boyhood associates which were of exactly the same character as that of Mr. Asbury. Another very common type of bogus conversion is that which results from mere acquiesence in the forms of conversion for the purpose of pleasing one's parents or relatives. In the particular evangelical services during which the writer "came to Jesus" in his boyhood the great majority of his friends and associates also "went forward" and confessed their sins. Certainly

nine-tenths of them had no real religious experience, but either took the step in perfunctory fashion, as a result of expediency and desire to please relatives and friends, or were stampeded into conversion by the music and psychological setting of the services. The point, then, is that the genuine cases of religious conversion, even among "converted" church members are relatively few, and these can be readily explained in a naturalistic fashion by psychology. Most Catholics are born, not converted; with them religion is a habit-complex built up from childhood.

Anthropology and biblical history have effectively eliminated the absurd doctrine of original sin, namely, the curse which God inflicted upon mankind as result of his sin in the Garden of Eden. This notion represented man as originally perfect and subsequently degraded as a penalty for his dereliction. Anthropology has completely reversed this picture of the development of humanity. It shows that man has made steady and gradual progress from ignorance and bestiality and that he has arrived at a higher state of cultural development today than at any other earlier period in his history. Likewise, biblical history as well as the history of religions in general has indicated the specific origins of this notion of original sin and has shown it to be nothing more or less than a product of primitive ignorance and mythology. Dr. Dietrich has effectively stated the modern scientific view of this old and depressing notion of original sin and inherent evil in the world:[8]

> So evil as we know it today is the natural condition of human life in the process of evolution. Man has not yet attained the fullness of his stature, but is still moving away from the animal whence he came to the ideals of truth, justice, good-will, whither he is bound. Salvation, therefore, is not a matter of being saved from any hell beyond the grave or from

[8] Dietrich, *The Superstition of Sin.*

the wrath of an angry God or from any evil that lies before; but rather a matter of being saved from the animal inheritance which is behind. Man needs to be saved, not from his future, but from his past; not from any hell toward which he is moving, but from the hell out of which he is striving to rise. The process of salvation, therefore, is not that of miraculous conversion by the grace of God, but that of education and experience by the grace of one's environment and one's will. And how much more hopeful an attitude is this than that which we have learned from the Christian church. Instead of picturing the race as essentially corrupt and desperately wicked, so that nothing but supernatural aid could redeem it from the curse of sin, we see humanity struggling up through the ages, bearing the burden of ancient habits and savage impulses, yet slowly straightening itself to the mastery over them. The survey of human history from the brute to man, from blind impulse to reason and control is inspiring, much more inspiring than the dreams of sudden regeneration or otherworld perfection. It gives us faith and hope in the future, and places the control of evil within our own hands. When we realize how far we have advanced in spite of ignorance and illusion, we cannot do less than travel hopefully, now that we have gained more knowledge and understanding of the past. And to faith and hope are added charity, once we appreciate how deep and tenacious are the savage survivals in human nature.

Anthropology and other aspects of natural science have proved that it is quite impossible to retain the old animistic conception of spiritual things or the spirit world. The scientist cannot concede the existence of any mysterious spiritual entity apart from the forces and tendencies which he studies. He refuses to admit any such mystical world distinguished from the secular realm and not adapted to scientific scrutiny and measurement. Dr. Randall has well pointed out the anachronism involved in this old conventional view of the spiritual world:[9]

[9] Randall, *Religion in the Modern World,* p. 188.

If we mean by the spiritual something coming into life from outside in a supernatural way, something that one receives from above when a miracle of conversion takes place, something that, regardless of his high ideals and his consecrated living, the natural man can know nothing about, then we must conclude that such a conception of the spiritual can have no place in the thinking of an intelligent man today. There is in modern thought no room for a special spiritual realm divorced from the nature in which our experience is lived, for spiritual forces that can break in upon the natural course of events. Spiritual can have a meaning only if it be applied to certain qualities of human experience as lived in its natural setting in the universe whose secrets scientific inquiry seeks to penetrate.

Anthropology, by revealing to us the origin of the belief in spirits and the spiritual world, makes it clear how little ground there is for any retention of such concepts by a person in rapport with modern knowledge.

It is scarcely necessary to argue with informed and intelligent persons with respect to the necessity of discarding the traditional notion of the spiritual world. Yet there are many writers who repudiate the old orthodoxy but still continue to use the term spiritual. It is commonly used, particularly by liberal ministers of the Gospel, to describe the psychic factors in life. They also utilize it as a term for æsthetic interests or the so-called higher things of life. An excellent example of this attempt to modernize this antique fossil is to be found in Professor Sellars' admirable book *Religion Coming of Age:*

Another way, perhaps, of bringing out what I have in mind is to point out that the spiritual is a term for activities concerned with the true, the good and the beautiful in all their manifestations, however humble. It is human activity which alone is spiritual. In this regard we must think of it, as we are beginning to do of mind, as not a thing but a function. Seen in this light, it will be quickly realized that it is absurd to contrast the spiritual with the physical.

While Professor Sellars' conception of the term spiritual involves a sensible and secular approach to the issue, it seems far better to the writer entirely to discard this ancient term, so much contaminated with primitive superstition, and to use such modern terms as psychological influences and æsthetic interests. Further, inasmuch as the modernized term spiritual is used without discrimination to cover both psychological factors and æsthetic values, one cannot always be sure just what is meant when the Modernist employs the term spiritual. The discarding of this term, then, and the adoption of up-to-date phraseology would serve to give greater precision to such discussion. We deem it best, then, absolutely to discard the whole conception of the spirit world and spiritual things, except when used in the historical and anthropological sense as a phase of primitive superstition and mythology.

Modern science, of course, disposes quickly of the ancient antithesis between the world of the flesh and the world of the spirit. Modern biology, physiological chemistry and physiology, have shown that one cannot maintain this old duality and separation of flesh and spirit. If we should interpret the term spirit, according to either the older or the newer rendition, as life and vitality, then there can be no flesh without spirit and no spirit without flesh. Without that dynamic physico-chemical organization and functioning known as life, flesh cannot exist, but quickly disintegrates. Without life the human body is but a collection of chemical substances, and a man weighing 150 pounds may be resolved into some 97 pounds of water, 23 pounds of albumen, 8 pounds of salt and 2 pounds of sugar. When death comes flesh rapidly decays and disintegrates. Flesh is necessary for life and life can only exist, in the case of man at least, as a manifestation of living flesh. These considerations, of course, make it necessary

also to discard the old antithesis between devotion to the life of the spirit and surrender to the life of the flesh. Life must be regarded as a totality which makes possible the highest realization of man's capacities, and we can no longer conceive of the human body as a duality in which the spirit struggles against the flesh. Asceticism like continued voluptuous indulgence must be condemned as an imperfect and an inadequate mode of realizing the most complete life of man. It needs hardly to be pointed out that modern knowledge repudiates entirely the validity of the conception of the Holy Spirit as a direct emanation of God which may enter into man and dominate his behavior. The orthodox notion of the Holy Spirit is nothing more or less than the Christian version of the primitive notion of *mana* or mysterious supernatural power.

Our contemporary information and outlook also make it quite impossible for us to defend the orthodox notion of prayer as a sort of magical device whereby we may enter into direct communion with God, influence His will and action, and alter our own lives or those of our friends and associates. In the first place, being quite unable to demonstrate the existence of God, we cannot have any assurance of reaching his ear. The only thinkable conception of God, at all harmonious with modern knowledge, is that of an indescribably magnificent cosmic Deity. The probability that a member of the human race could enter into direct personal communion with a Deity of this sort and bring about a modification of His ways and purposes seems remote indeed. The preposterous assumptions underlying the orthodox notions of prayer have led nearly all Modernists to concede the improbability or indeed the impossibility of affecting God's will or the course of events through prayer. They have rested content with the effort to justify prayer on the ground of its beneficial effect upon

the mind of the communicant. This attitude towards prayer is very well summarized by Professors Ames and Wieman in the following quotation:[10]

> Prayer is far more than any form of words or conscious thoughts, although it may employ these. It is an attitude, a habit, a disposition in which is sought the fullest possible participation in that larger reality into which all significant thought and action radiate. Professor Wieman uses the word "adjustment," He says: "To worship is to turn one's whole attention to this present, ultimate, sustaining condition of human life called God, with all the fullness of attainment which is to be achieved through right adjustment to him. The religious man is stirred with this vision, is given assurance and peace by it, is inspired by it to reconstruct our human way of living with respect to personal habits, social organization, and intellectual, artistic, æsthetic, and moral endeavors, to the end of making those adjustments which will enable God to fill our lives with the good which may be ours."

A major criticism which may be levied against this Modernistic rationalization of the ancient magical device of prayer is that its efficiency in producing an attitude of poise, confidence and satisfaction on the part of the person praying is in direct proportion to the belief of the individual in the efficacy of prayer. It may be conceded that an orthodox person, thoroughly believing in the premises underlying his prayerful endeavor, might secure some of the results suggested by Professors Ames and Wieman. It is to be doubted, however, as to whether anything like comparable psychological results can be produced in the mind of a Modernist who recognizes that there is no possibility of his getting into literal contact with God and realizing the results of his supplication. Conscious self-deception can never evoke the same response as earnest conviction. In short, the Modernist's defense of prayer is

[10] Edward Scribner Ames, *Religion*, p. 219.

a defense which would hold good chiefly with the Fundamentalist whom he repudiates. Even more serious is the criticism which can be brought forth by mental hygiene and psychiatry. If a man desires personal adjustment to the difficult problems of life, he will secure it far better through having recourse to the science of personal adjustment, namely, psychiatry. If one is seeking insight, poise and contentment, psychoanalysis and other forms of psychotherapy have much more to offer than prayer. In defending prayer the Modernist, then, can scarcely be regarded as doing anything more than eulogizing self-deception.

The modern secular point of view repudiates the traditional attitude towards sanctity and sacred things. Anthropology has revealed to us how the conception of sanctity and the sacred arose in primitive man's imagination. It was nothing but the superstitious belief that mysterious supernatural power had taken up its abode in various things and persons. The sacred was that which was charged to a unique degree with this potent supernatural essence. Now that we have discarded our belief in mysterious supernatural power, there is no longer any logical reason for retaining our belief in the validity of the concept of sanctity. Indeed, the very conception of sacred things is an obstruction to clear and honest thinking. As long as any group of things, practices or concepts are regarded as sacred and therefore above criticism, they are bound to constitute obstacles to progress and freedom. Professor James Harvey Robinson has splendidly stated the contemporary repudiation of the concept of the sacred:[11]

> One of the great obstacles to a free reconsideration of the details of our human plight is our tendency to regard familiar

[11] Robinson, in *Harper's Magazine*, August, 1926.

notions as "sacred"; that is, too assured to be questioned except by the perverse and wicked. This word sacred to the student of human sentiment is redolent of ancient, musty misapprehensions. It recalls a primitive and savage setting-off of purity and impurity, cleanness and uncleanness. The French retain the double meaning of the word in their *sacré,* which means at once "blessed" and "damned." Blessed is he who agrees with me and let others be damned. When we realize that this and that notion of ours is "sacred," we may be sure that, as Mr. William Trotter has emphasized in his *Instinct of the Herd, in Peace and War,* it is a childish impression which we have never carefully scrutinized. A woman once warned me that she was "religious" and that I had better be careful what I said to her. I replied that she seemed to suspect me of irreligion from her standpoint, and that she should also be considerate of my feelings. The claim to immunity on the ground of sacredness is by no means confined to religious controversy; it now includes the current system of business, governmental organization, and the family. It is one of the important obstacles in the way of free discussion and readapting our habits so as to bring them into accord with increasing knowledge and new conditions.

Simple prejudices or unconsidered convictions are so numerous that the urgence and shortness of life hardly permit any of us, even the most alert, to summon all of them before the judgment seat. Then there are the sacred prejudices of which it seems to me we might become aware and beware, if we are sufficiently honest and energetic. History might be so re-written that it would at least eliminate the feeling that any of our ideas or habits should be exempt from prosecution when grounds for indictment were suggested by experience.

To the person accustomed to modern ways of thinking nothing can be held to be sacred, that is, above criticism. We can no longer judge anything on the basis of its supposed relationship to supernatural power. Beliefs, institutions and practices are important and significant in proportion as they serve the needs of mankind on earth here and now, in other words, to the degree which they advance

human interests and promote the good life. Yet the best institutions cannot be regarded as sacred. The historical and evolutionary point of view renders necessary the acceptance of the notion that no institution can remain perfect without alteration. Institutions and practices once excellent may become outgrown and poorly adjusted to a later age. To attach a notion of sanctity to such institutions and practices would not only be intellectually stupid but culturally obstructive.

With the disappearance of the validity of the conceptions of sacredness and sanctity in any supernatural sense we must recognize the desirability of relinquishing any notion of the validity or utility of the so-called sacred persons, particularly the category of sainthood. In the old intellectual perspective the saint was indeed a valuable adjunct of religion. He was an ever-present evidence of the existence and operation of supernatural power. He was an adept in sacred matters and an ever-living witness to the glory and power of God. By his other-worldliness and asceticism he offered an example of the best possible life, namely, a life of maximum withdrawal from the world of the flesh and the Devil. He led the perfect spiritual life. Even the extreme filth of many of the earlier saints was a mark of holiness, as it gave evidence of contempt for the things of this world.

In the light of our modern perspective none of these arguments for, or justifications of, the saint can be seriously defended. Recognizing the illusion of the supernatural, we cannot accord much credibility or respect to the supposedly supreme exemplifications of supernatural power in life. Repudiating both the reality and the validity of the sacred, we can see little to admire in the outstanding illustrations of human sanctity. Finding the supreme good to reside for man in the things of this world, it

is difficult to avoid identifying the other-worldliness of the saint with literally anti-social and deplorable tendencies and manifestations in life. Socially speaking the saint is, as Professor Mecklin made clear in the *American Journal of Sociology* for January, 1919, not only an anachronism but a liability. Nor do we have to accept the slogan of certain contemporary soap manufacturers to the effect that cleanliness is next to godliness to be repelled by the often incredible dirt and stench associated with the living habits of many of the more conspicuous saints. A person whose filth was sufficient to repel even a hungry hyena can scarcely make a vivid appeal to our æsthetic sensibilities. In short, the whole concept of sainthood is entirely out of adjustment with the modern order of things. The saint is legitimate subject for the researches and analysis of a specialist in the anti-social and the psychopathic.

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Chapter VII

SANCTUARY VERSUS LABORATORY

Every pathway of modern science is closed with the sign: "No Thoroughfare. Moses."

(Thomas Henry Huxley)

In another two years, from Maine to California and from the Great Lakes to the Gulf, there will be lighted in this country countless bonfires, devouring those damnable and detestable books on evolution. (Edward Young Clarke).

I. IS THE CONFLICT OF SCIENCE WITH RELIGION OR THEOLOGY?

MUCH of the material in the preceding chapters has been devoted to indicating the divers ways in which the tenets of orthodoxy have crumbled before the findings of science and the results of critical scholarship. The general subject of the conflict between science and religion is, however, so important an issue and is so widely discussed today that we believe it is worthy of thorough and discriminating treatment in a special chapter. Hence, we shall consider directly and specifically the conflict of science with contemporary religion. We shall analyze the discrepancies and divergencies between religion and all branches of science, not limiting ourselves, as is usually done in such discussions, to the conflict between religion and the physical sciences. To regard the subject of the conflict of science and religion as an issue between religion and the physical and biological sciences alone is to deal with only a part of this highly interesting and relevant field of controversy. In fact, many religious liberals or

Modernists, who accept the outstanding discoveries of the physical and biological sciences, very frequently maintain an attitude towards religion which is as incompatible with the social sciences as the theology of the Fundamentalist.

Some might raise the question as to how the author can feel sufficiently assured that there is actually a conflict between science and religion as to assign a specific chapter to this issue. In the controversy which followed the writer's paper before the History of Science Society in December, 1928, Cardinal Hayes, preaching in St. Patrick's Cathedral, said: "It is the fashion of the day to seek conflict and contradiction between religion and science. To some, nature is a blind, unknowing force, perhaps self-created and no doubt eternal. True religion reveres true science, rejoicing in its unfolding of the beauties of nature because it makes manifest the omnipotent intelligence of God. True religion enables us to advance from the visible to the invisible, from the finite to the infinite. Is this not the aim of science? Another error common today is that the Catholic Church is the enemy of science. One thing the Catholic Church fears least, as made clear by Pius XI to an eminent historian, is truth, whether historical, scientific or economic. The Church throughout its history has always patronized the search for truth." At the same time a Protestant scientist, Dr. Henry Fairfield Osborn, said in regard to the same issue: "We have been very desirous of requesting the clergy to relieve the public mind of the belief that there is any conflict between science and religion. There is none. There can be none. Some of the greatest men of science have been very religious." Yet one cannot very well forget the eloquent and influential book of the late Andrew Dickson White on *The History of the Warfare Between Science and Theology*, and what may be legitimately regarded as the sequel to Dr. White's book,

Maynard Shipley's *The War on Modern Science.* These books recount in detail the conflict between science and religion throughout the entire history of Christendom, Mr. Shipley concentrating upon the more recent aspects of the struggle. Further, these books are but two of the best known among scores devoted to the age-old warfare between science and religion. It is obvious to any person reasonably informed in the fields of history and science that, whatever the rhetoric of either group, there has actually been a bitter conflict between the two camps which has persisted into our own time. The conflict between science and religion can be denied only by arbitrarily and evasively defining science, religion or both, in such a manner as to exclude the possibility of any clash between them. No one can well deny the fact of the conflict between science and religion in the form in which they have actually existed.

We should put at rest at this point a venerable antique in the realm of apologetics, namely, the assertion given wide currency by Andrew D. White, to the effect that the conflict is not between science and religion but between science and theology. This differentiation between religion and theology is one which has been abandoned by all up-to-date students of religion. Religion has three major manifestations: (1) the emotional thrill; (2) the behavior responses or ritualistic exercises engendered by this thrill, and (3) the conceptual interpretations and explanations of the religious thrill and the activities associated therewith. This third phase of religion is what has been known as theology. Therefore, theology can not be separated from religion. Indeed, Dr. Dieffenbach goes so far as to hold that: "Theology is not only the most essential thing *about* religion; it is the main ingredient *in* religion."

A theology may be as tenable as the religious emotions

and activities upon which it is based, and of which it is the rationalized explanation. If the religious thrill arises from unscientific assumptions and interpretations, then there is as much conflict between science and the religious emotions as between science and the theological formulations in that particular religious complex. If the activities of worship and the moral code growing out of the emotional basis of a religion are scientifically unsound, then there is as definite a clash between science and the religious rites and morals as between science and the conceptual formulations. Inasmuch as theology represents the intellectual manifestations of religion, it is obvious that the most sharp and immediate conflict comes between science and theology, but this is quite another thing from holding that there is no conflict between science and religion—that the issue is solely one between science and theology.

Of course, it is true that theology may be mistaken in its interpretation of the nature of the religious thrill and of the motives of religious acts. Indeed, in the past, theology has almost invariably been mistaken in its interpretation of the origins and nature of religious emotions and actions. Most of it is still mistaken. The majority of contemporary theologians fight shy of the only subject-matter and techniques of investigation which could give them an accurate insight into the nature of religion. Indeed, religion arose because of the inadequacy of theology, if we may accept Professor Shotwell's notion that it was man's reaction to experiences apprehended but not comprehended. In fact, an adequate theology would put an end to orthodoxy by revealing the illusions upon which it is based. Many religious experiences may have a sound and realistic psychological basis and yet the theological interpretation of these experiences may be wholly misleading. The conventional interpretations of mysticism and of conversion

are good cases in point. Yet, this fact that theology may be, and usually is, mistaken about the religious experiences it interprets, in no way establishes the view that there is no conflict between science and religious experiences. Indeed, many religious experiences take on their special or peculiar qualities because of the false theological premises, on the basis of which they are accepted. One could scarcely imagine any efficacy in the sacraments of the Catholic Church if the communicants had the insight of the trained anthropologist, psychologist and cultural historian into their origins and nature. All of this indicates the inseparable connection between theology and other phases of the religious complex.

One cannot intelligently discuss the conflict between science and religion unless he divides the various religious groups in western Christendom into somewhat distinct classes on the basis of the degree to which they have squared their attitude with the results of science and scholarship. There is a complete conflict all along the line between Christian Fundamentalism, Catholic or Protestant, and modern science. At the same time, there is relatively slight conflict between such advanced brands of Modernism as Unitarian Humanism and reformed Judaism and modern science. We shall divide the leading exponents of religion in western society into logical groups and classes and deal with the degree of conflict between science and the type of religion espoused by each of these groups.

II. CATHOLICISM AND SCIENCE

Though we shall consider orthodoxy under three different headings, namely, Catholicism, Protestantism and orthodox Judaism, they all might be treated as a unit as far as their basic opposition to modern science is con-

cerned. The Protestant Reformation engendered a bitter conflict between Catholic and Protestant Christians and has given rise to an altogether unfounded notion that there are fundamental differences of the first order in the bodies of belief espoused by orthodox Catholics and Protestants. As an actual matter of fact, the most conspicuous thing about Catholicism and orthodox Protestantism is the essential identity in the basic elements of belief common to both systems. The Protestants accepted, as did the Catholics, the whole patristic outlook on the world. In other words, both share fully a common belief in the Christian Epic in its entirety. Their historical perspective is similar; their notion of the origin of man, of the Bible, of prophecies and miracles, of heaven and hell, of demons and angels are all identical. The differences between Catholicism and Protestantism involve only minor details of belief and secondary matters concerning church administration and authority. About a decade ago the ultra-orthodox Protestants, the so-called Fundamentalists, set forth five basic essentials of their religious belief, which we herewith reproduce:

1. The inerrancy and infallibility of the Bible.
2. The Virgin Birth and the complete Deity of Christ Jesus.
3. The resurrection of the same body of Jesus which was three days buried.
4. The substitutionary atonement of Jesus for the sins of the world.
5. The second coming of Jesus in bodily form, according to the Scriptures.

The Rev. Dr. Riley, President of the World's Christian Fundamentals Association, has added three other foundation concepts, which further elaborate the attitude of Protestant orthodoxy:

1. We believe that man was created in the image of God, that he sinned, and thereby incurred not only physical death, but also that spiritual death which is separation from God; and that all human beings are born with a sinful nature, and, in the case of those who reach moral responsibility, become sinners in thought, word, and deed.
2. We believe that all who receive by faith the Lord Jesus Christ are born again of the Holy Spirit and thereby become children of God.
3. We believe in the bodily resurrection of the just and the unjust, the everlasting felicity of the saved and the everlasting conscious suffering of the lost.

It is quite evident that there is nothing in this summary of Protestant fundamentals which would not be accepted by any Catholic theologian, and it is equally clear that these Fundamentalist tenets would serve as a splendid summary of the doctrinal foundations of Catholicism. The Catholic Church relies upon supplementary theological interpretations of biblical doctrines to a greater degree than the Protestants, but even these theological discussions are based upon the same body of original beliefs which the Protestants espouse.

In considering the relationship of the Catholic Church to science it is necessary to be on our guard against both extremely apologetic and openly hostile attitudes toward the relations of Catholicism and science. In the writings of men like Dr. James J. Walsh, we find advanced the preposterous conception that the Catholic Church has always been the patron of science, has invariably encouraged scientific research and has never shown the slightest inclination to repress scientific activity or obscure the results of scientific investigation. On the other hand, in the books of many professional free thinkers and anti-Christian writers we find the equally indefensible view that no good

Catholic can possibly be a good scientist in any field, that the Catholic Church has dealt severely with every natural scientist over whom she could exert any control or discipline, and that the Catholic Church has invariably crushed out every sign of budding intellectual independence. The fact is that the Catholic Church has never vigorously or openly opposed those forms of scientific activity which did not in some direct way involve the sanctity and permanence of Catholic dogma. It is equally true that the Catholic Church has never knowingly permitted or approved those forms of scientific research and scholarly endeavor which would place directly in jeopardy the basic truths defended by the Church.

One reason why it is difficult to arrive at any precise knowledge of the attitude of the Catholic Church to science is that its officials talk quite differently under varied circumstances. When uttering a pronouncement before scientists or when attacked as antagonistic to science, the spokesmen of the Church will assume a very friendly and apologetic attitude with respect to science. The sermon of Cardinal Hayes on December 30, 1928, from which we quoted above, is an excellent example of this attitude. On the other hand, when the Church is not desirous of disarming the suspicions of scientists or those friendly to science, it speaks in quite a different tone. A sample of the frank Catholic attitude towards science may be discovered in the following paragraph taken from a lecture of Timothy Healy, the first Governor-General of the Irish Free State, and a man thoroughly grounded in the authoritative teachings of the Catholic Church:[1]

> These so-called scientists and philosophers are mere bubble blowers. There is no greater humbug than the so-called scientist of modern times. . . . This monkey business was started

[1] E. Boyd Barrett, *While Peter Sleeps,* p. 239.

because it struck deliberately at the existence of the human soul. And it is because these men know that these so-called philosophies are part of the devil's apparatus that they are so continuously and assiduously propagating them, and for that reason the Church is continually denying them and incurring thereby the hatred of these philosophical nincompoops. The only thing I can see this free-thought gives is the right to loose living and loose thinking. They may box the compass of unbelief in any way they please, they may decorate it with the pretenses of human liberty, but in the end it comes down to nothing else than the license to defraud one's neighbor or one's neighbor's wife.

Equally illuminating is the opinion of the Rev. Father D'Arcy and of the Vatican Council quoted by Dr. E. Boyd Barrett in his *While Peter Sleeps:*[2]

"All else counts very little with Catholicism compared with its sacred commission to sanctify souls and to prepare them for immortal happiness. To gain this end it is prepared to sacrifice many of the accidental joys of life, if necessary, and it demands of its members that they should discipline their curiosity. Intellectual freedom can be bought at too dear a price . . . so the Catholic Church tells its members sometimes to leave new theories alone because the average man is not capable of assimilating them or of sifting the wheat from the chaff." But the Church goes even further than this for it tells its members that it is impossible for science to throw any further light upon the doctrines of the Church, and that as a consequence science has no part to play in religion. "If any one shall say," declared the Vatican Council, "that it is possible that with the progress of science a sense may ever be given to the doctrines proposed by the Church, other than that which the Church has understood and understands . . . *anathema sit.*" The Church therefore insists that the faithful admit, under pain of the sin of heresy, that she is in possession of the full and complete truth touching all matters of faith . . . and that science is essentially and eternally incompetent to aid her in this respect.

[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 248–9.

In a sense the Catholics are, from their point of view, accurate in contending that there is no conflict between science and Catholicism. There is and can be none, provided science will accept an inferior position, will recognize the inherent superiority of religious truth, and will surrender in all cases of apparent discrepancy between the supernatural knowledge disseminated by the Church and the human knowledge accumulated by science. In short, the conflict between science and Catholicism can be resolved if science will but learn its place and remain in it. Dr. E. Boyd Barrett, a learned Catholic of liberal inclinations, has well summarized this Catholic conception of the superiority of the Catholic religion to science:[3]

> The root of the antagonism between Catholicism and modern science seems to lie in the fact that the Church *claims a privileged position* vis-à-vis of science. She speaks down to science; she attempts to chaperon science; she sits in judgment on the findings of science thus constituting herself the ultimate tribunal of truth. . . . The Church does not in the least conceal the fact that she claims a privileged position vis-à-vis of science. In the Vatican Council (*Session* III, *De Fide* IV) we find the Church asserting her right to preserve science from "falling into errors contrary to divine doctrine and from overstepping its own boundaries and throwing into confusion matters that belong to the domain of faith." The Church's claim is put succinctly by the Catholic Encyclopedia: "when a clearly defined dogma contradicts a scientific assertion the latter has to be revised and it will be found to be premature."
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> The reason why the Church feels so sure of her position is that she trusts absolutely to the inerrancy of "revelation." While science recognizes only one kind of knowledge, namely such as can be gained by the exercise of the senses and the mind, the Church recognizes two kinds of knowledge, the divine (revealed) and the human. Of these two she places divine knowledge on a privileged plane. *It* is certain, unequiv-

[3] Barrett, *op. cit.*, pp. 239–42.

ocal, exact. It rests upon the authority of God, who "can neither deceive nor be deceived." Scientists may err and come to false conclusions, but not so God. Hence "a well-instructed Catholic child (who has been taught the facts of revelation) knows more of the important truths than did Kant, Herbert Spencer or Huxley. . . ."

We find then a very real antagonism between science and Catholicism, founded in the fact that Catholicism places supernatural knowledge above human knowledge while science refuses to admit the trustworthiness of supernatural knowledge. This antagonism is sharpened by the additional fact that science rejects both Catholic theology and Catholic philosophy as fundamentally vitiated by "prejudices and preconceptions."

It is quite obvious that no self-respecting scientist would for a moment accept any such lowly and inferior status as Catholicism assigns to him. He would insist rather that religion must concede the priority of scientifically demonstrated truth, and must build its beliefs and practices upon the cornerstone of scientific discoveries. With such divergent attitudes as these toward the relative position and function of science and religion it is difficult to concede the validity of Cardinal Hayes' contention that there is no conflict between the doctrines of the Catholic Church and the attitudes and achievements of science.

One of the most characteristic devices of the Catholic apologists, who, under certain circumstances, desire to show that the Catholic Church has not been ill-disposed towards science is to enumerate an impressive list of devout Catholic scientists. This Catholic register of scientists will always contain, among others, the names of Albertus Magnus, Roger Bacon, Nicholas of Cues, Copernicus, Galileo, Pascal, Vesalius, Mendel and Pasteur. Reference is also frequently made to the glories of eighteenth century science in Catholic France. When, however, one examines this list from the standpoint of precise historical facts, it

is seen to be completely unconvincing as a mode of demonstrating the friendliness of the Catholic Church toward science. The scientific contribution of Albertus Magnus consisted mainly of highly rudimentary and inoffensive descriptive observations in the field of botany and biology. Roger Bacon's most important contributions to science fell in the field of optics, certainly nothing directly to disturb the repose of the Church. His writings on scientific method, however, aroused the suspicion of the Church and led to clerical interference with his work, even though he may not have spent as long a time in prison as the older free-thinking historians have alleged. Nicholas of Cues is famous primarily for his work in mathematics and astronomy and for his assistance in working out the reform of the calendar which was later adopted by Pope Gregory. He was a leading defender of the Conciliar theory in church politics, a precursor of Bruno, and never in good standing with the conservative Catholics.

Copernicus was intimidated by the Church and was for a long time unable to find any publisher for his great work. The publishers were fearful of punishment at the behest of the Church if they brought out his book. When Copernicus finally induced Osiander to publish his work, the latter felt it necessary to protect himself by suggesting in an introduction that the contents embraced only a hypothesis which Copernicus himself did not take too seriously. Indeed the works of Copernicus and all supporting the Copernican theory were on the Catholic Index of prohibited books until the middle of the eighteenth century. The Church condemned the work of Galileo, quoting the famous biblical phrase, "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye looking up into heaven?" It may be that the hostile free-thinking historians have exaggerated Galileo's persecution by the Church, but there is no way of escaping the fact

that the Church interferred with his work and condemned his doctrines. Pascal has long been known as one of the most notorious examples of the compartmentalized mind in the whole history of human thought. The ecclesiastical authorities bitterly attacked Vesalius, the father of modern anatomy, because his findings challenged the dogmas of the Church. For example, the Church had declared that man has one less rib on one side than on the other, inasmuch as one rib had been taken from man to create Eve. Vesalius found that man had an equal number of ribs on both sides. Further, the Church had contended that there was in the body an indestructible "resurrection bone" which furnished the nucleus of the body which was resurrected after death. Vesalius was unable to locate this interesting member in the process of his anatomical explorations. It is probably true that the Catholic Church did not force Vesalius to undertake the pilgrimage to Jerusalem, in the course of which he passed away, but there is no doubt whatever of extensive ecclesiastical opposition to, and interference with, his work.

It is nothing less than a daring gesture for the Catholics to refer to the glories of science in eighteenth century France. The scientists and critical philosophers of France in the eighteenth century were perpetually harassed by the Church, and by the State at the instigation of the Church. Diderot's account of the difficulties encountered in publishing his *Encyclopedia* gives a very good picture of the attitude of the Catholic Church and Catholic France towards science and philosophy in the eighteenth century. Henry Thomas Buckle has offered detailed proof to the effect that nearly every important scientific work published by a Frenchman in the eighteenth century had to be published outside of France, usually in Holland, Switzerland or England.

Coming down to Mendel, we find that he had to content himself by publishing the results of his epoch-making researches in an obscure and technical journal, *The Bulletin of the Natural History Society of Brünn.* There they remained until they were unearthed at the opening of the twentieth century by evolutionary biologists, chiefly Correns, De Vries, Tschermak and Bateson. If the Catholic Church had been truly interested in patronizing science, it would have made as much of Mendel's researches as it did of the Papal *Syllabus of Errors* or the dogma of Papal infallibility. Surely Mendel's generalizations possessed comparably greater significance for the intellectual progress of the race than all of the pronouncements of the Church since its beginnings. Certainly evolution has had no more bitter and unscrupulous opponents than Catholic critics. One can inform himself on this matter by consulting the writings of such Catholics as B. C. A. Windle, Barry O'Toole, F. P. Le Buffe and Albert McCann. Further, it must be remembered that Mendel carried on his researches solely in the vegetable kingdom and made no effort to generalize their applications to man. Pasteur's researches fell almost entirely in the field of pathology and in no way raised important issues which conflicted with orthodox theology.

This rapid examination of the record of the so-called Catholic men of science shows that the appeal to a list of names of religious scientists is both infantile and ineffective unless one examines each scientist individually to discover the nature of his scientific work and the relation of religious forces and organizations toward it. We may make certain summary generalizations in regard to the claims of Catholic apologists in regard to Catholic men in the scientific field. In the first place all Christian scholars

were formally Catholics until the time of the Protestant Reformation; therefore, it was natural that all Christian scientists down to the sixteenth century should be Catholic scientists. The best scientific work of the Middle Ages was, of course, carried on by the Muslim scientists.

The actual history of Catholics in science shows that either the Catholic scientists have not dealt with controversial matters, or have not been good Catholics, or have hidden the results of their work, or have been condemned and persecuted by the Church. It cannot be shown that there has ever been a single eminent Catholic scientist who has carried on researches directly challenging the dogmas of the Church and has escaped interference or persecution.

Of course, the most effective method of demonstrating the opposition of the Catholic Church to science is to show its espousal of the orthodox religious view of the world, God and man, which is opposed to the scientific view in every way, and to point out how the Church regards science as inferior to religion and church dogmas. Having already made this clear, we may perhaps call attention to certain specific matters. In the first place, one may refer to the famous *Syllabus of Errors* issued by Pope Pius IX in 1864, at the very time when Mendel was carrying on his researches. In this His Holiness condemned what were essentially the outstanding achievements of science and critical thought during the whole of modern times. If one really wants elaborate clinical evidence of just how the most powerful Pope of modern times regarded modern scientific knowledge he can consult for himself this Papal Syllabus. Owing to the fact that the *Syllabus of Errors* is not readily accessible to the general reader we reproduce herewith certain representative sections of

the *Syllabus* which deal with the freedom of thought and modern science and critical thought. It must be remembered that the Pope condemned these propositions:

1. There exists no supreme, most wise, and most provident divine being distinct from the universe, and God is none other than nature, and is therefore subject to change. In effect, God is produced in man and in the world, and all things are God, and have the very substance of God. God is therefore one and the same thing with the world, and thence spirit is the same thing with matter, necessity with liberty, true with false, good with evil, justice with injustice.
3. Human reason without any regard to God, is the sole arbiter of truth and falsehood, of good and evil; it is its own law to itself, and suffices by its natural force to secure the welfare of men and of nations.
4. All the truths of religion are derived from the native strength of human reason; whence reason is the master rule by which man can and ought to arrive at the knowledge of all truths of every kind.
6. Christian faith contradicts human reason, and divine revelation not only does not benefit, but even injures the perfection of man.
8. As human reason is placed on a level with religion, so theological matters must be treated in the same manner as philosophical ones.
9. All the dogmas of the Christian religion are, without exception, the object of scientific knowledge or philosophy, and human reason, instructed solely by history, is able, by its own natural strength and principles, to arrive at the true knowledge of even the most abstruse dogmas: provided such dogmas be proposed as subject-matter for human reason.

12. The decrees of the Apostolic See and of the Roman Congregations fetter the free progress of science.
13. The method and principles by which the old scholastic doctors cultivated theology are no longer suitable to the demands of the age and the progress of science.
14. Philosophy must be treated of without any account being taken of supernatural revelation.
15. Every man is free to embrace and profess the religion he shall believe true, guided by the light of reason.
18. Protestantism is nothing more than another form of the same true Christian religion, in which it is possible to be equally pleasing to God as in the Catholic Church.
56. Moral laws do not stand in need of the divine sanction, and there is no necessity that human laws should be conformable to the law of nature, and receive their sanction from God.

One could further call attention to the scientific impossibility of certain of the basic dogmas of the Church as, for example, that of the Virgin Birth of Jesus. As an illustration of the evasive and disingenuous methods of the Catholics in their scientific instruction, we may quote the entry on evolution to be found in an authoritative Catholic work, *Historical Terms and Facts*, by Father Francis S. Betten, Professor of History in the John Carroll University, Cleveland, Ohio:[4]

Evolution. (1) This is the name of the doctrine which holds that plants and animals have "evolved" from lower forms, or that they have become what they now are by changes from what they were before. Many changes or "evolutions" are indeed known to have taken place. But atheistic writers teach that *all the plants* have "evolved" or "developed" from lifeless

[4] Betten, *op. cit.*, pp. 63-65.

matter, *all the beasts* from plants, and that *man himself*, body and soul, has "evolved" from some animal.

(2) Now it is absolutely impossible that *the soul*, being a spiritual substance should have come from anything material. This would be against philosophy, or, to use a plainer expression, against sound reason. The Church, moreover, must condemn a doctrine as a flagrant heresy, which would destroy one of the most important and fundamental dogmas of Faith. No investigation, no discovery, can ever lead to such a conclusion.

(3) But could not the *human body*, as distinct from the soul, have developed in such a way that some animal in successive generations grew more and more perfect, until at last its body became fit to receive from God an immortal soul? Although this is, even considered in itself, not at all likely, it may, perhaps be absolutely possible. It supposes, however, that God created such an animal expressly for that purpose and brought about the circumstances under which the changes were bound to occur. But even if this course be within the limits of possibility, it by no means follows that it has really taken place. God certainly could choose another way, and we have every reason to presume that He did. Holy Scripture says: "God formed man from the slime of the earth and breathed into his face the breath of life." (Gen. II, 7.) This can only mean that by an act of His will God brought together and put in their place all those elements of which a man's body consists, and into the body thus shaped He infused the immortal soul. The words of the text evidently indicate that man's body, before the moment that the soul entered it, was "slime of the earth," that is, lifeless matter. For this reason the Church, although not condemning the theory of evolution in this point as clearly heretical, has forbidden it to be taught in Catholic schools. (Decision of the Biblical Commission, June 30, 1909.)

Even from the merely natural standpoint, outside of what we know from the Bible, it would be an entirely unwarranted assertion to say that man's body developed from some animal, the monkey, for instance. We indeed observe that the bodies of some animals are of a more perfect structure than those of others, and thus we may speak of a regular series rising in

perfection to the highest we know of. (This fact by no means proves that the higher types have evolved from the lower.) But there is a gap between the most man-like animal and the human body itself. It has often been claimed that the "Missing Link," that is, some animal which by its qualities would bridge this gap over, has been discovered. But the expectations thus roused have always been disappointed. And if such an animal, or its remains, were ever found, two more proofs would still be needed; first that it had evolved from a lower type, and second, that from it had evolved the body of man.

(4) Concerning *plants and animals* philosophy teaches that there is an essential difference between matter and plants, and again between plants and animals. Each higher class is endowed with perfections and faculties which the lower does not possess, and which consequently no combination of the qualities of the lower class is able to produce under any circumstances. (See Maher: *Psychology,* pp. 547-551.) We must therefore conclude that the appearance of the plants upon the face of the earth, and again the existence of the first animals suppose an interference of the power of God, a kind of creation. (See *Creation,* 6, 7, 9.) The Church will probably never pronounce on this but leave it to philosophy to settle. But that does not make our conclusion less reliable and true.

(5) God may, however, have imposed certain laws upon the nature of both plants and animals, according to which they, while remaining either plants or animals, can under certain circumstances change partly from one form to another. Conscientious scientists, both Catholic and non-Catholic, have discovered many interesting examples of such cases of "evolution." But they assure us that the number of them is much more limited in range, than a superficial look at the great variety of bones, skeletons, petrefactions, and traces, found in the various strata of the earth, would lead us to suppose.

The treatment of "The Six Days of Creation" in the same book, which is too long to be quoted here, is even more edifying, instructive and amusing.

The general attitude of the Catholic Church is fundamentally opposed to one of the basic doctrines of modern social science, namely, that morality is a purely secular

matter and must be judged in the light of its effect upon the human race here on earth. The position of the Catholic Church is that morals are exclusively a matter of divine revelation and relate chiefly to the problem of securing the salvation of the soul in the world to come. This Catholic attitude toward the source of morals is well stated in the doctrine of papal infallibility adopted by the Church at the Council of 1870:

> The Roman Pontiff, when he speaks *ex cathedra,* that is, when in discharge of the office of pastor and teacher of all Christians, by virtue of his supreme Apostolic authority, he defines through the divine assistance promised to him in the blessed Peter, a doctrine regarding faith or morals to be held by the universal Church, is possessed of that infallibility with which the divine Redeemer willed that his Church should be endowed for defining doctrines regarding faith or morals.

In regard to specific aspects of morals the Catholic Church stands in diametric opposition to scientific attitudes and knowledge. Nowhere else is this as conspicuous as in the Catholic attitude towards sex. Instead of regarding sex as a purely secular social problem, to be judged by its mundane effects, the Church insists upon viewing sex from the supernatural point of view and has created a code of sexology derived from theology and not in any sense from biology, psychology and sociology. It is not concerned with the effect of sex upon physical or mental health, but is rather interested in controlling sex in such a manner as to conform to Catholic dogmas and to advance the numerical strength of the Church. This is well exemplified by the attitude of the Church toward the pleasure function of sex, the sacramental theory of marriage, the undesirability of divorce and the unthinkably wicked nature of birth-control. The Catholic Church is particularly bitterly opposed to the applica-

tion of psychology and social science to the explanation of religion, and one of the most brilliant of modern Catholic psychologists, Dr. E. Boyd Barrett, felt it necessary to resign his teaching position and retire from the Jesuit Order because he could not harmonize the Catholic attitude towards religion with his own psychological studies in this field.

Of course, the most fundamental and insoluble clash between Catholicism and science is to be discovered in the inherent conflict between science and the premises of primitive magic. The Catholic Church, in its basic nature and services, is the modern great organization for the execution of social magic. This is not to accuse the Catholic clergy of conscious hypocrisy or studied exploitation of their parishoners. Most of them are sincere believers in the authenticity and divinely-revealed nature of the rites of the Church which they administer. The magical nature of the activities of the Catholic Church appear most clearly in the general conception that, for value received, the Church will assure good luck to its communicants in this world and in the next. All of its rites are devoted to the general realization of this basic objective of luck and protection. The sacraments provide special forms of intervention in behalf of particular types of luck and safety. The saying of masses, the uttering of prayers and the hearing of confessions all contribute in their way to the realization of good luck for the parties involved. It is obvious that this invocation of good luck through the manipulation of supernatural power is opposed in every way to the tenets and methods of natural and social science. This conflict of Catholicism with science is much more deep-seated and elemental than the incidental attitude of Catholicism towards evolution or the authorship of the Pentateuch.

In addition to this larger magic in the very nature of the Catholic Church and its services, there is the persistence of the lesser magic, in the form of the worship and exploitation of holy relics for the purpose of increasing one's luck and good fortune. The greater and lesser magic are, of course, inseparably linked in the fact that no mass can be said except over a relic on the altar. Kirby Page thus describes this devotion to relics by the Catholics:[1]

> The relics of Christ and the martyrs were thought to possess divine virtue. Pieces of wood from the Holy Cross were the most highly treasured of all relics. Healing and protective power were supposed to reside in every particle of a saint's body, the hair and teeth being especially efficacious. The relics of St. Gratus were given credit for extinguishing a forest fire in 1542. Valuable relics became a source of great income to a church. For centuries the craze for relics was so great that innumerable frauds were perpetrated. At present there are fifty-six fingers of St. Peter the Dominican in the churches of Europe, twenty-six heads of St. Juliene, thirty bodies of St. George, twelve heads of St. John the Baptist, seventy veils of the Virgin Mary, as well as many tears and footprints of Jesus.

In his authoritative *Age of the Reformation* Preserved Smith thus describes the nature of the esteem for relics by the Church:

> The passion for the relics of the saints led to an enormous traffic in spurious articles. There appeared to be enough of the wood of the true cross, said Erasmus, to make a ship; there were exhibited five shin-bones of the ass on which Christ rode, whole bottles of the Virgin's milk, and several complete bits of skin saved from the circumcision of Jesus.

Even more impressive was the collection of the Archbishop of Mayence who possessed, among other things,

[1] Page, *Jesus or Christianity?*

"a fair piece of Moses' left horn, a whole pound of the wind that blew for Elijah in the cave on Mount Horeb and two feathers and an egg of the Holy Ghost." One of the great European shrines is that at Trèves where the shirt of Christ is on exhibition. At Loreto in Italy may be seen the sacred house in which the Virgin is supposed to have lived. It is said to have come from Palestine to Italy in three leaps. The body of Saint James is located in Compostelo in Spain. It proceeded across the sea from Judea to Spain in a stone sarcophagus under its own power.

That the belief in relics is not yet dead may be seen from the following description of Father Dolan's bringing over of some relics of St. Therèse in the summer of 1928. In his *While Peter Sleeps* Boyd Barrett thus reproduces the description of Father Dolan's arrival, as given in a leading New York daily, and adds his own comment thereupon:[6]

"Father Dolan" (of whom the picture is given), "accompanied by his secretary Father Clement Sullivan, brought back with him *six rare relics of* Saint Therèse (the "Little Flower") which will be placed in the shrine in Chicago. The relics are, a *fragment of her coffin,* and *of her habit,* both mounted and encased in glass; an object something like a monstrance in which the background is of silk embroidered rose-petals and the center *the withered rose,* which, according to the legend, the Saint gave to a Scotch girl; and three lockets, two containing *a fragment of her skin;* a third *a lock of her hair.*

"Father Dolan (who is the National Director of the 'Society of the Little Flower of Jesus'), said that the nuns at the little French shrine of Ste. Therèse at Lisieux, had sent the objects to America *to fortify the shrine* here. He was granted many privileges at Lisieux in recognition of his work here."

When the bits of skin, and coffin and habit, together with the lock of hair and the withered rose, are solemnly installed

[6] Barrett, *op. cit.,* p. 199-201.

by Father Dolan in his shrine in Chicago, vast throngs will assemble to do honor to these relics, and quite possibly the assistance of the police will be needed to keep order—which will be a great triumph for Father Dolan. During the novena in honor of the relics, his church will be packed every evening by Chicagoans, who will find relief from the sputtering of gangsters' bullets, in the story of the Scotch girl's rose, and in honoring the French girl-saint's lock of hair. In a short time a million dollars will flow into the hands of Father Dolan for the building of a larger shrine more worthy of the priceless relics—and let us hope some of it will go to the little French Sisters at Lisieux who "fortified the shrine" at Chicago. In all this, however, if we are to believe the Cathedral Bulletin quoted above, there is no "sentimental piety," but it is "something very real, something very solid"—in fact "religion pure and undefiled."

In fact, there is little doubt that the traffic in relics is more active today than at any other period in the history of Catholicism. The new Catholic churches in the United States are in sore need of a supply of relics commensurate with their luxuriousness and prestige. What is more, the prosperity of American Catholics enables them to procure these relics in the required number from poverty-stricken but relic-laden Europe. Likewise, the increasing wealth makes possible ever larger pilgrimages to shrines like that of Our Lady of Loudres or St. Anne de Beaupré.

In short, the unprejudiced person may concede to the Catholic Church the most defensible and justifiable pretensions to serving the needs of the orthodox Christian. If a person actually believes in the fundamentals of the Christian Epic, it appears to the writer that the Catholic Church can bring more complete satisfaction to such a believer than any other branch of orthodoxy. No open-minded person can well resent it when the Catholic Church stands forth as the most powerful and dignified defender of the Faith. On the other hand, when Catholic church-

men make seductive gestures to scientists and liberal thinkers and represent Catholicism as a patron of scientific research and modern thought, we cannot then concede to the Church even the virtue of candor and intellectual integrity, to say nothing of convincing argumentation.

III. PROTESTANT FUNDAMENTALISM AND SCIENCE

We need not take any space to demonstrate that the orthodox Protestant version of Christianity is as thoroughly opposed to science as is Catholicism. All we need do in this place is to point out some essential differences between the respective attitudes and practices of Catholics and Protestants with regard to science and critical thought. In the first place, Protestant orthodoxy is much more frank than Catholicism in admitting the conflict between science and religion. To this degree the Protestants are probably less astute. In opposing the findings of science the Protestants rely more directly upon the Bible than the Catholics, the latter of whom place great confidence in subsequent theological comments on scriptural statements. The Protestants are, therefore, somewhat more strictly limited to the literal statements of the Bible in regard to science. Catholic apologists frequently make much of this and contend that it is possible for the Catholic Church to modify its dogmas in keeping with the progress of science. This is, however, a vain and empty boast. In the first place, the Catholic Church has rarely modified its dogmas to square with the findings of science, and when it has done so the change has been slow and made with great reluctance. Again, the Catholic Church takes the same position as the Protestants as to the ultimate final authority of the Bible and its specific divine authorship in every respect.

Further, the general Catholic position is that science must revise its findings in harmony with church dogmas rather than that the Church must modify its dogmas in the light of scientific progress. The Catholic interpretations to date have been essentially in accord with the text of the Bible which the Protestant Fundamentalists regard as faultless. The infallible word of scripture and the infallible dogma of the Church have coincided remarkably well in the course of the conflict of science and religion in the last three quarters of a century. If the Protestants are more given to bibilolatry than Catholics, they escape from the more preposterous aspects of the worship of relics and recourse to shrines. If Mr. Bryan at the Dayton trial expressed his willingness to believe any statement, however preposterous, provided it appeared in the Bible, he at least refrained from submitting as evidence of the truth of Christianity any eggs or tail-feathers extracted from the Holy Ghost or any contention that his rheumatism had been improved by a visit to the shrine of Our Lady of Lourdes. In short, one can say that orthodox Protestants are completely opposed to modern science when it conflicts with the Bible and with church doctrines, and that such believers both admit this comprehensive and interminable conflict and glory in it.

Some Protestants may object to the writer's tendency to indicate essential identity between Catholics and orthodox Protestants in regard to the degree of conflict bebetween these cults and modern science. We are glad to quote the following opinion by Professor John G. Machen of the Princeton Theological Seminary, in which he frankly admits that the differences between Catholicism and orthodox Presbyterianism are slight indeed as compared with the contrast between orthodox Presbyterianism and Devout Modernism: [7]

[7] Cited in Kirby Page, *Jesus or Christianity?*

Two mutually exclusive religions are being propagated within the Presbyterian church, as within other "evangelical" churches. One is the great redemptive religion known as Christianity; the other is the naturalistic or agnostic modernism represented by Dr. Fosdick and by many Presbyterian ministers. If one of these is true the other is false. It is, therefore, quite intolerable that both of them should be propagated by the same funds with the endorsement of the same funds. We would not indeed obscure the difference which divides us from Rome. The gulf is indeed profound. But profound as it is, it seems almost trifling compared to the abyss which stands between us and many ministers of our own church. The church of Rome may represent a perversion of the Christian religion; but naturalistic liberalism is not Christianity at all.

Chapters V and VI of the present work are devoted essentially to a summary of orthodoxy and an indication of the way in which modern science refutes the orthodox point of view and factual beliefs as to the nature of the cosmos, God and man. Therefore, it is not necessary to repeat at this point what was said in those chapters. They make clear in detail the nature and degree of the irreconcilable conflict between modern science and orthodox Christianity.

We need not devote a separate section to Jewish orthodoxy. The orthodox Jews reject, of course, the whole Christian notion of Jesus, but accept much the same views as orthodox Catholics and Protestants in regard to the Old Testament and its scientific teachings—in other words all biblical science. They give no quarter to those findings in science which challenge biblical statements. Like the Catholics, they supplement scriptural statements by a vast body of extra-scriptural theological and legal interpretations. Whereas the Catholics have developed metaphysics most thoroughly in connection with religion, so the Jews have worked out the most elaborate body of

ecclesiastical jurisprudence. The Jews have added to their theological conceptions a body of social practices built up to preserve their integrity in a Gentile world, but it is obvious that the maintenance of a unique Jewish culture can only be justified upon the ground of the orthodox Jewish pretensions to being literally the chosen people of God. The scientific and scholarly progress which has undermined orthodox Jewish religious views is also inevitably wiping out those cultural distinctions which have set off the Jew from the Gentile. Dr. Randall has commented very cogently upon this precarious state of Jewish orthodoxy in the modern world: [8]

> Jewish orthodoxy is at an even greater disadvantage than Protestant. It rests on the practice of a detailed body of ritual and ceremonial observances, developed to organize the social and personal life of a Jewish community living in isolation apart from Gentiles. When Jews left the Ghetto to mingle with Christians, the social observances of the Jewish community were doomed. They have been kept alive in America only by new arrivals from Eastern Europe; with the cutting down of immigration, Jews themselves look forward to their early disappearance.

Orthodox Judaism offers a special conflict with science in its conception of a chosen people. Its ethnic pretensions are on a par with the pseudo-science of the Nordic myth of Madison Grant and others. Further the orthodox Jews are in conflict with both physical anthropology and history in their notion of the physical uniqueness and purity of the so-called Jewish race today. There is no more of a Jewish race today than there is a Catholic race or a Mohammedan race.

[8] Randall, *Religion and the Modern Age,* pp. 140-141.

IV. DEVOUT MODERNISM AND SCIENCE

In present-day theological terminology Modernism is essentially identical with liberal religious views in the Protestant Church. A quarter of a century ago, in part stimulated by the moderate liberalism of Pope Leo XIII, there developed within the Catholic Church a so-called Modernist movement led by Loisy, Blondel, Tyrell, Houtin, Duchesne, Schell, Leroy, von Hugel, Minocchi and Fogazzaro. Under a more reactionary pope, Pius X, Modernism was stamped out and some of the Modernist leaders excommunicated from the Church. The story of the rise and eclipse of Catholic Modernism is best told in the striking book of Alfred Loisy, the greatest of the Modernists, entitled *My Duel with the Vatican.* Religious Modernism is, then, today a phenomenon limited to Protestants and reformed Jews.

The Modernists themselves fall into a number of groups. We shall distinguish two, namely, the Devout Modernists and the Advanced Modernists or Religious Radicals. There is, of course, no sharp dividing line between the more conservative Devout Modernists and the Fundamentalists or between the more radical of the Devout Modernists and the more conservative of the Advanced Modernists. The classes are as a group, however, distinct and easily recognizable. No one would confuse William Adams Brown or Henry N. Wieman, to mention two of the ablest Devout Modernists, with John H. Dietrich, Albert C. Dieffenbach or Rabbi Feinberg, three conspicuous Advanced Modernists or Radicals.

The essential conservatism of Devout Modernism when hard pressed may be discerned from the content of the confession of faith made by Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick at his trial in 1925. It is well to remember that Dr. Fos-

dick is a radical member of the Devout Modernists, so much so in fact that many would classify him as a conservative member of the Advanced Modernists. Dr. Fosdick's creed follows:[9]

> I believe in the personal God revealed in Christ, in His omnipresent activity and endless resources to achieve His purposes for us and for all men; I believe in Christ, His Deity, His sacrificial saviorhood, His resurrected and triumphant life, His rightful lordship, and the indispensableness of His message to mankind.
>
> In the indwelling Spirit I believe, and the forgiveness of sins, the redeemed and victorious life, the triumph of righteousness on earth, and the life everlasting.
>
> This faith I find in the Scriptures, and the object of my ministry is to lead men to the Scriptures as the standard and norm of religious experience—the progressive revelation of God in the history of a unique people, culminating in Christ.

We agree with Dr. Dieffenbach that "there is not a syllable here that Dr. J. Gresham Machen, the chief of the Presbyterian Fundamentalists could find fault with." It might seem that Dr. Machen may have exaggerated the differences between himself and Dr. Fosdick in the passage cited a few pages back. The explanation is, of course, to be found in the fact that in his periodical writings and even in some of his sermons Dr. Fosdick goes far beyond his bare and adroit confession of faith.

Devout Modernism represents a peculiarly heterogeneous and confused body of religious thought.[10] Its adherents accept, at least formally, the essentials of modern science and biblical criticism. It might be more correct to say that they accept the fundamental findings of nineteenth century science, conspicuously evolution, for they have acquainted themselves but slightly with the astonish-

[9] A. C. Dieffenbach, *Religious Liberty*, pp. 91–92.

[10] See G. B. Smith, *Religious Thought in the Last Quarter Century.*

ing scientific progress of the twentieth century. They are particularly ignorant of the advances in psychology and the social sciences and their application to religion. Having accepted, at least in a superficial way, the outstanding aspects of nineteenth century science, the Devout Modernist attempts to harmonize scientific findings with a wholly different intellectual attitude and body of ideas, namely, the Christian Epic. The Devout Modernist, if a scholar, is thoroughly acquainted with the results of modern biblical scholarship, but he takes an attitude toward the nature and importance of the religion of the Bible which differs little from that held by decently well educated Fundamentalists. The Devout Modernist is the best example in the contemporary religious field of the type of person who desires to eat his cake and still have it. It is this attempt of the Devout Modernist to render compatible two bodies of thought that are actually incompatible which has led to the notorious intellectual confusion characteristic of Devout Modernist apologetics. The Devout Modernists may not unfairly be likened unto a group of sportsmen solemnly insisting on planning and executing a season of hunting and fishing in the American Museum of Natural History. Dr. Randall has given us a splendid summary of the essentials of devout modernist doctrine:[11]

> Like all the Romantic idealisms, these liberal theologies started with a frankly humanistic approach, with human experience. They found in man at his highest the truest revelation of God. They were all monistic, emphasizing the oneness of God and man, and the indwelling presence of God in Nature. They therefore looked askance at the Platonic dualism in terms of which traditional Christian theology had been formulated in the early days. God is above all immanent in Man and Nature; the old distinction between Natural and

[11] Randall, *Religion and the Modern World,* pp. 120-121.

Supernatural has no further meaning. The order of Nature, above all the whole process of creative evolution striving upward to man, is the expression, nay, the very presence of God Himself. Every event is divine; the true miracle is the working of majestic law. All noble words and spiritual insights are revelations of the divine nature. Man is not corrupt and fallen, but made in God's image, potentially divine. His natural life lived at its best is inherently worthy and good. God is in human nature, not external to it; man needs no mystical or sacramental grace to be born anew, but simply the earnest determination to recognize his divine sonship and live as a child of God should. Jesus Christ is divine, as all men are, but in no miraculous sense; his unique leadership and divinity rest on his complete consciousness of his expression of God. The Virgin Birth was a poetical but crude attempt to express this unique awareness of divinity, in terms of substance and origin rather than in terms of the awakened divinity of his life and teachings. Divinity is to be judged, not by its origins, but by its fruits; it is a value pertaining to certain activities.

We may now consider certain specific aspects of Devout Modernism and indicate the deviations of Modernistic views from the facts and methods of science. The 200 theological students studied by Professor Betts in his above-mentioned book were quite obviously thoroughly Modernistic in their theology and biblical scholarship. Yet everyone of these students was certain of the existence of God, and 98 per cent. believed that the relation of God to man is best expressed in the word "Father." It is probably not unfair to Devout Modernism to hold that its adherents all subscribe to the demonstrated certainty of the existence of God, which is manifestly a position that cannot be squared with the facts of science. Science is as yet unable either to prove or disprove the existence of God. Especially divergent from demonstrable scientific fact is the tendency of most Devout Modernists not only to personify God but even to attempt to assign personal-

ity to the impressive cosmos recently revealed by astrophysics. The personification of the cosmic God is, of course, a product of wishful thinking and anthropocentric formulations, while to conceive of the operations of the galaxy of galaxies of galaxies in terms of human personality is certainly an astonishing example of the vestiges of animism and of anthropocentric stereotypes. In the preceding chapter we indicated how the Devout Modernists are prone to attempt to rationalize the fossils of orthodoxy, such as the soul, sin, prayer and the like, instead of honestly and frankly abandoning these outworn terms and attempting to construct religious concepts and practices harmonious with modern knowledge. An admirable example of this tendency is afforded by the article of Professor Henry N. Wieman, "Is Sin Out of Date," in the *Christian Century* for March 14, 1929. If one desires to get a clear conception of the difference between such rationalizing exercises and a straight-forward contemporaneous attitude, he will do well to compare this article by Professor Wieman with the masterly sermon of Dr. John H. Dietrich on "The Superstition of Sin." (See below, pp. 344 ff.)

While Devout Modernism, particularly when functioning in fashionable pulpits, loves to make a formal parade of its mastery of and friendliness toward modern science, its devotees have never thoroughly accepted the scientific point of view nor have they acquainted themselves with those striking aspects of science which have, in the last twenty-five years, so completely modified our conception of the universe, the world and man. The Devout Modernists are particularly ignorant of social science and are especially reluctant to recognize the development and validity of the scientific explanation of religion offered by psychology, anthropology and sociology. They are notably insistent upon the dogma that religion is a field

of the theologian rather than of the social scientist. Dr. Randall has admirably summarized the fundamental failure of Devout Modernism to adjust itself to the facts and attitudes of twentieth century science:[12]

In the light of the present situation, we can see that the 19th century philosophies and liberal theologies made no real adjustment to the spirit of science. They were rebelling, with the idealistic thinkers of the Romantic era, against the narrowness and dogmatism of Newtonian science; they naturally sought further truth in another realm by another method. Even when they welcomed evolution, they never saw the real implications of its insistence on man's biological setting in a natural environment; they made of it another Romantic faith, with no comprehension of what it ultimately meant. They never really absorbed the spirit of science.

This whole intellectual attitude and apparatus of liberal religious thinking, still dominant, with few exceptions, in modernist circles, is irrelevant today. It is irrelevant intellectually, because contemporary philosophical thinking has passed beyond idealism, has passed beyond creative evolution, has passed beyond the will to believe. Thinkers today are no longer escaping from Newtonian science; they have transformed the harsh mechanism of the 19th century into a scientific world that has a place for all the levels of human experience, and concepts for dealing with them intellectually. Philosophers are today exploring the implications of man's biological experience, of the new physics, of the new sciences of man. The present generation has seen new philosophies that base themselves frankly on an acceptance of the scientific spirit and method, supersede the older idealisms and evolutionary faiths. For the most part, liberal religious leaders are still offering to men whose intellectual techniques have thus changed, a religious attitude and a philosophical interpretation of the religious life a hundred years out of date.

This attitude is still suspicious of science. It endeavors to limit its scope, to set bounds to the realm where its methods will apply. There must be truths beyond science, approaches

[12] Randall, *op. cit.*, pp. 124-126, 129.

to reality that will discover, not only values and meanings, but facts and descriptions, where scientific verification is impotent. Liberals have pared away their faith in a supernatural governance of the world until less and less is left; like the young woman who produced a baby with no apparent father, they apologize that it is after all a very little baby. They are still afraid to accept the modern scientific philosophies that frankly acknowledge the implications of biology, psychology, anthropology, and physics, that above all welcome the tentative and investigating spirit of scientific thinking. Philosophers have worked out a naturalistic interpretation of experience that gives full scope to all the verifiable needs of the moral and spiritual life. Religious leaders are still ignorant of what has been accomplished, or are afraid to follow.

Moreover, the moral optimism of religious liberalism, its individualism, its reliance on the divinity of man and nature, is a weak weapon with which to face the ethical demands of modern society. It insists on the comfortable reality of God and Heaven, but it shrinks from the harder facts of the Devil and Hell. It is apt to assume complacently that all is right with the world, and to gloss over the disagreeable call to make it better. It lends itself far more easily to the smug middle-class worship of prosperity than to the vital religious impulses at the basis of our humanitarian and social faiths. . . .

Judged, therefore, in the light of present intellectual and social needs, it can hardly be said that the mediating compromise of liberal religion in recent times has been as successful as the great historic reconstructions of the past. Most modernist leaders are still thinking in terms that are irrelevant to the serious thought of today; they are merely acquiescing in the passing social and moral ideals of the day, with little attempt at illuminating criticism. It is apparent to the sympathetic observer that such religious thought and life is still serving well those who have in their own lives broken from rigid orthodoxy. But it is equally apparent that present-day modernism must undergo great transformations before it can hope to satisfy the religious needs of our civilization.

The tendency of Devout Modernism to stand with one foot on the Christian Epic and the other upon nineteenth

century science, and the proclivity to rationalize the archaic rather than to adopt the new, has led to marked and uniform intellectual confusion on the part of this group of religious liberals. Abandoning the premises of orthodoxy the Devout Modernist nevertheless attempts to save essentially the same supernatural view of life which the orthodox defend. Consequently, orthodoxy possesses a logical consistency to which the Devout Modernist cannot pretend. Dr. Randall has concisely stated the superior logic of orthodoxy:[13]

> Orthodoxy has, moreover, an intellectual power that liberalism has so far lacked. In the face of the uncertainty and confusion, the muddled thinking and mingling of contradictory ideas, that so abound in modernist circles, its theological tenets stand out with clarity and precision. In accepting them there is no vague hoping to eat one's cake and still have it. The orthodox know just where they stand. Particularly is this true of the refined and elaborate thought of Catholic philosophy. The Church has never countenanced what it calls fideism, reliance on sentiment and emotion alone. It has recognized that a great body of men can be united only by a faith that is clear-cut and objective. It has always stood for rationalism,[14] and today its rationalistic philosophy has a great appeal for those disheartened by the irrationalism and voluntarism of modern thought. To be sure, it has always dictated the authoritative premises; but that in itself has much to recommend it over mere personal prejudice and bias.
>
> So markedly does the clarity of orthodoxy contrast with the confusion and more or less unconscious hypocrisy of liberalism, that more radical minds who have broken with traditional religion completely are apt to respect the orthodox believer more highly than the muddled modernist. They do not speak his language; but they can understand what he means, and appreciate the power of the experience he expresses. Nothing is more difficult for the outsider to sympathize with, than the

[13] Randall, *op. cit.*, p. 145.

[14] *Ie.*, for logical reasoning.

attempt to combine two loyalties; nothing harder to understand than the man who remains within the church without believing, who recites the creed with mental denial.

Another inconsistency of Devout Modernism is the fact that it often tends to combine with a mild theological Modernism an outlook which is essentially moral Fundamentalism. While formally repudiating the Fundamentalist view of the Bible and biblical morals, the Devout Modernists take essentially the same view of life as that possessed by the Fundamentalists. Some of the most urbane and distinguished of our Devout Modernist clergymen lock arms with the more reactionary Methodist bishops in their espousal of Prohibition and in their condemnation of the newer scientific and sociological views on sex. In particular do the Devout Modernists embrace the orthodox notion that morality is primarily a matter of conventional correctness in sex behavior. They refuse to take a broad, socio-economic view of morals. They hold, for example, that to violate the Mann Act on a railroad sleeping car would be a gross moral derilection, but they would scarcely admit within the scope of legitimate moral discussion the question of the rectitude of stealing the whole railroad by means of certain shrewd methods of contemporary finance. Indeed, there is a marked tendency for the Devout Modernists to combine formal theological liberalism with economic smugness and conservatism. There is an inevitable temptation to do this. Both tendencies appeal to the fashionable churches and indicate the way to pastoral success. The minister who combines in his sermon a eulogy of the higher criticism, especially of the Old Testament, and an appreciation of the career and social services of the late Judge Gary, is likely to please the great majority of his congregation. To the writer, however, the nature of a minister's attitude with respect

to the Child Labor Amendment, old-age unemployment and labor unionism appear much more important than his views on the authorship of the Pentateuch or the date of the Book of Daniel. As between a glib Modernist with a smug contentment regarding the present social and economic order and a Fundamentalist in theology like Father John A. Ryan, who is at the same time one of the outstanding exponents of social justice in the world today, we have no hesitation whatever in declaring our overwhelming preference for Father Ryan. It is only fair to point out, however, that the majority of the Christian Socialists in the United States, some of whom we shall mention later, are to be listed theologically as Devout Modernists but sociologically as radicals and reformers.

The question is often raised as to whether the Devout Modernists will not become more radical and ultimately unite with the Advanced Modernists. At present the tendency is exactly the opposite. As Dr. Dieffenbach makes clear in Chapters V-VI of his *Religious Liberty*, the Devout Modernists are everywhere slipping back and coming to terms with the Fundamentalists. Their leaders have either deserted them or have become quiescent.

V. ADVANCED MODERNISM AND THE SCIENTIFIC POINT OF VIEW

In the group which we call the Advanced Modernists or Religious Radicals we would place the majority of Unitarians and Universalists, the advanced reformed rabbis of the Jewish faith, and the radical fringe of the Congregationalists, Episcopalians and certain Evangelical groups. The most conspicuous and straightforward representatives of Advanced Modernism are the Unitarian Humanists and the radical rabbis. The conflict between

science and the tenets of the Advanced Modernists is relatively slight. They fully accept the scientific point of view and the most recent findings of contemporary science. In general, they are agnostic, secular and æsthetic in their point of view. The views of Dr. John H. Dietrich, the leader of Unitarian Humanism, embrace a conception of religion with which no reasonable scientist could seriously criticize. We reproduce herewith certain sections from Dr. Dietrich's authoritative summary in his printed sermon entitled, "My Religion." This will indicate the thorough-going way in which he has assimilated the outlook of modern science and will make plain the vast gulf which separates Advanced Modernism, not only from Fundamentalism but even from Devout Modernism:

In the use of the word religion, I accept the biological rather than the historical interpretation, and think of religion simply as a phase of the larger process of life. Historically religion has been tied up with a belief in supernatural beings and man's relation to them, but the consciousness of our time is beginning to employ it in a different sense. It is the attitude of devotion and loyalty that is stressed today rather than the object to which these are attached, and concerns, not supernatural beings, but man's deep sense of the content and relations of human life in the kind of world in which we find ourselves. Biology teaches that life is simply one long process of adjustment on the part of an organism, either through change of self or environment, to make life advantageous; and with man, who is peculiarly a psychic and social being, one of the phases of such adjustment is the development of an emotional attitude toward the universe and the relation in which he stands to it. . . .

Therefore, I am concerned principally with centering my religion about reality. If religion is merely one phase of the adjustment of the human organism to its environment in order that life may be full and complete, then the tremendously important thing is to know ourselves as we really are and our environment as it really is, to discard all the romantic ideas

about man and the universe which we have created in order to escape from the hard cold facts of human existence. That is why I say my religion consists in frankly and fearlessly facing the facts of the universe and of human life, whether those facts be fair or foul. Religions have been in the habit of spinning beautiful and comforting theories of human life, and then interpreting facts to fit these theories; but my religion insists that we must make our theories conform to facts, no matter how harsh or disagreeable those facts may be, for if nature holds fatal secrets for us, the sooner we know them the better.

So my religion consists first in trying to discover what kind of world I live in, and what kind of being I am. And for this knowledge, I turn to the results of the inquiring human mind with its use of the scientific method. This stands in direct contrast to the methods of most religions, which is known as revelation. . . .

So I take for my authority in religion the actual facts that have been discovered by science. Beyond these facts which have actually been observed and verified, we really know nothing; and I make no assumptions which are not warranted by these facts. This means again an entire break with the old time religions. These assumed three things which formed the foundation of their whole structure. First, they assumed that the universe and man were created by and are in control of a personal Being, or at least of some great purpose and so adjusted themselves to this Being or purpose as they conceived it. Second, they assumed that man was the central creature of this universe, indeed the reason for its existence, and that the whole universe was made for the specific purpose of helping man to accomplish his ends and attain what he calls happiness. Third, that this central creature of existence was endowed with endless life which would reach its consummation after death, and that eternal blessedness could be attained elsewhere only by making certain sacrifices during this short period of earthly existence.

But the facts do not warrant any such assumptions. They point rather to a self-existing and self-creating universe, governed by laws that inhere in nature—an unconscious, unpremeditated and inevitable working out of forces that reside

in the atom as much as in the star, in the lowest as well as in the highest form of life; that man is but the result of the working of these forces thus far on this little planet, and may not represent the highest and noblest form of the creative process; and like every other form of existence is doomed, if not to extinction, at least to change. The whole cosmos seems to be a process of constant related change, in the aeons of eternity ever making and re-making itself, dissolving and reforming one universe after another, in which process man has for the moment raised his head and developed what we call consciousness. And if you ask me, "To what end, what is the purpose of this whole process?" I can only answer that I have not the faintest idea. Whether the universe is guided by intelligence and to some particular end, no man knows. In his momentary existence on this remote speck of the universe, man has not the ability to discern or the temerity to proclaim what purpose, if any, may underlie this process which extends throughout the impenetrable abysses of space and reaches through the inconceivable aeons of time. But it is to such a universe that I feel I must adjust myself, and it is such a universe which forms the basis of my religion, my sense of sacredness. Before the mystery that shrouds it, I stand with as much reverence as any theist before the conception of his deity, as any religionist who believes himself to understand the nature and the purposes of the infinite; and my conception of the relation which I bear to this ultimate reality of which I am a fragment is as intimate and devout as that of any man who believes himself to be the specially created son of a heavenly father. . . .

I set up an idealized and glorified humanity as the object of worship and of service; and my religion consists in a devoted attempt to realize through consecrated effort the gradual transformation of human life into its likeness.

And I believe this should be the object of every man's religion, his sense of the sacred, regardless of his conception of the universe and of God and of man. For if there be a God, man cannot know who or what he is, or how to worship and glorify him. He has no actual knowledge of anything above or beyond himself; and, therefore, even though there be a God, the best way to glorify him would be to glorify the

highest product of his creation. And this thought applies to some cosmic purpose. If the whole universe is moving toward "some far-off divine event," we do not know what the event is, and so cannot make any valuable contribution to it; except, as in the case of God, I cannot imagine a better contribution than the enrichment and ennoblement of human nature, which again is the highest product of the cosmic process thus far. The same is true of immortality. Even though man lives after death, we cannot know what kind of life he will then enjoy, and so cannot make any definite preparation for it, except again I cannot imagine a better method of preparation than the development of the highest and best in human character during this life.

On one important point, however, even some of the exponents of so advanced a position as Unitarian Humanism must modify their views if they are to be compatible with science. What we have in mind is the doctrine of the freedom of the will. In Dr. Curtis W. Reese's excellent summary of Unitarian Humanism (*Humanism*, pp. 38-9) he says: "The moral life begins with freedom to choose or not to choose a line of action; and no moral significance can be attached to any action in the absence of this freedom." To be sure Dr. Reese tries to identify this moral freedom with the control of the emotions by an intellect well stored with knowledge. This, however, confuses two quite different issues and problems. Further, knowledge appropriated and interpreted by the intellect is as much involved in the deterministic process as our emotional impulses. The very fact that we are able to control our life on the basis of knowledge, as Dr. Reese insists, logically implies that we are not free from the determining effect of this information. What Dr. Reese actually means is that we should more and more thoroughly control our life on the basis of the reliable information regarding the good life on earth which has been

amassed by natural, psychological and social science. He should not contaminate and defile this noble aspiration by in any way identifying it with the archaic theory of free will, which has no more standing before modern psychological science than the Hebraic "firmament" has in the light of the astrophysics of Jeans, Einstein, Shapley, Eddington and Dingle.

While there is very slight conflict between natural science and Advanced Unitarianism, one does occasionally discover a considerable clash between the views of certain Advanced Modernists and up-to-date social science. This is to be observed chiefly in the cases of economic Fundamentalism on the part of theological radicals. Not a few radical Unitarian preachers, especially in rich metropolitan churches, express their doubt as to the existence of God and their complete certainty that no claim can be made for the divinity of Jesus, and in their next breath look upon the ways and methods of shrewd New England bankers and textile barons and find them good. Indeed, in many of the more wealthy Unitarian Churches extreme forms of theological radicalism have served as a sort of over-compensation for social and economic Fundamentalism. If compelled to choose between a theological radical of this sort and a social revolutionary like Reinhold Niebuhr, whose theology aligns him with the Devout Modernists, we frankly prefer Mr. Niebuhr.

Certain writers who are more loath than Dr. Dietrich and his associates to let loose of the rationalized rubrics of antique religion have criticized Unitarian Humanism as incomplete and illogical. We reproduce herewith the criticism which has been set forth by Professor Edward Scribner Ames, in his recent book, *Religion*:[15]

[15] Ames, *Religion*, pp. 174-5.

Many advocates of modern "humanism" commit this fallacy of supposing that one term of a dualistic conception may be dropped while retaining the other. Convinced that the empirical values are the only values discoverable, they conclude that this justifies their naturalistic, humanistic interpretation of the world. They are therefore compelled to devote much of their strength to denying the existence of God and the supernatural. But as a result, they are left with a truncated world, and the lower half of the old dualistic order. They have unwittingly separated man from nature by the same stroke, and have left their humanistic realm suspended between the void of matter on the one side and the vacancy left on the other by the removal of the old supernaturalistic deity.

The writer does not concede the validity of Dr. Ames' criticism. It would appear that what he is actually saying is that the Unitarian Humanists have been clear and logical enough in their thinking to recognize that nothing is gained by surrendering the old theism and supernaturalism in behalf of much less sincere and convincing rationalizations. They have insisted upon keeping their feet solidly implanted upon the rock of scientific fact, social experience and æsthetic appreciation and have rigorously rejected the mischievous and confusing "extra-human factor" which we believe vitiates the religious writings of men like Professors Ames and Wieman and destroys most of the value which might otherwise exist in their thoughtful and urbane volumes.

The whole issue is involved in what Professor Wieman has called the distinction between "floppers" and "finders" developed in the *Christian Century* for March 14, 1929. Professor Wieman here defines the "flopper" as follows:—

The floppers change with the times but they lose all sense of direction. No line of continuity leads them through the present from the past into the future. They merely go round and round with the changing fads of thought. They have no vision of fixed stars to guide their pilgrimage. They do not

grow; they just flop. They are ostentatiously and desperately modern.

Passing to the "finders" he describes them in the following terms:

> The finders are they who find the path of development which leads them on continuously from the past into the future through the zigzag and changing landmarks of the present. They do not lose their sense of direction despite the blind alleys and false starts of our present confusion. Change is for them an organic development, not a breaking off and starting over. Infantile ideas of God and sin are not cast off like outworn shells but are developed and grow as their minds grow and as the age grows. They do not flop out of the old ideas nor become fossilized in them, but find a way of progressively interpreting them.

This interesting distinction of Professor Wieman's is worthy of at least brief analysis in its bearing upon the reconstruction of religion. The emergence of scientific and secular thought has actually been achieved chiefly in the form of flopping. The modern astronomers "flopped" out of astrology—they did not "grow with" astrological doctrines but abandoned altogether the astrological interests and methods. The modern chemists flopped out of alchemy and Aristotle's views of the four elements. Modern biologists flopped out of the ideas of spontaneous generation, the non-sexuality of plants and the pre-Harvey views of physiology. Modern medicine flopped out of the Hippocratic doctrine of the four humors and the astrological view of the temperaments—and so on. There was no possibility whatever of "growing with" the archaic ideas into modern conceptions. No one could "grow with" Hippocrates, Galen and Celus into an Osler or a Crile. Further, we respectfully submit that what Professor Wieman describes as "growing with" earlier doctrines actually means noth-

ing but finding new terminology with which to effect a progressive rationalization of essentially the same old attitudes and opinions. We do not in any sense ask Professor Wieman to flop out of religion. We should be quite content to have him flop in more deeply. All that we ask him to do is to flop out of an essentially anthropomorphic and geocentric theism which certainly cannot be harmonized with our modern knowledge of the cosmos, whether we let loose of the God concept altogether or attempt to formulate a new conception of God in the light of modern astrophysical knowledge. This is preëminently a case where nothing less than a flop will suffice.

Professor Wieman holds that the writer is a "finder" in history and a "flopper" in religion. As an actual matter of fact, all he asks Professor Wieman to do is exactly what all reputable historians have done, namely, to reject the primitive view of the direct interference of God in human affairs. Just as Professor Wieman now evaluates and differentiates sin with respect to its relation to God—the extra-human factor—so historians once looked upon history as the record of God's ways with man. Not only was this true of Chronicles-Ezra-Nehemiah and the historical works of the early Christian historiographers but it was also true even of such secular historical works as those by Livy, who frankly admitted that he wrote to prove to the Roman youth that the Roman gods had presided over the destiny of Rome. Even George Bancroft, a century ago, held that the American constitution was essentially a divine product. Now, however, when the American Legion produces an American history for the high schools which proceeds on the assumption of the divine selection and guidance of the American people, Professor Wieman smiles contemptuously upon so dangerous and arrogant an anachronism. All we ask is that Professor

Wieman and the theologians follow the example of the historians. There is no more reason for believing that God considers or determines earthly morals than there is for holding that he wins battles. We laughed derisively at the former Kaiser for invoking the "good old German God" to aid him in winning the World War; but thinkers like Professor Wieman accord great respect to the equally archaic exercise of Immanuel Kant in invoking the same "good old German God" to serve as the basis of the morality of liberal Protestantdom.

We do not contend, of course, that the historians are without fault or all free from vestiges of ancient belief. Many eminent American historians have complained because Montague Summers, who believes in witchcraft, was chosen to write a volume on witchcraft in the *History of Civilization Series*—admittedly a great mistake in editorial judgment. Yet most of these same historians a year or two before voted with enthusiasm for the election of Henry Osborn Taylor as President of the American Historical Association, in spite of the fact that one of Dr. Taylor's latest books, *The Freedom of the Mind in History*, proclaimed that the chief function of the historian is to trace the hand of God in human events—certain as flagrant an anachronism as the belief in witches.

Professor Wieman contends that we can have no sound and effective body of morality without basing it upon the extra-human or supernatural factor. We contend just the opposite, namely, that we can never have a sensible reconstruction of morality until the extra-human or supermundane factor is resolutely and absolutely excluded from practical consideration. Just the moment the supernatural element is admitted we provide an opportunity for ethical obscurantism and confusion to flourish with abandon and we destroy completely any ground for a sane and deter-

minate reconstruction of morals. Just so long as we insist upon retaining as the chief determining factor in moral reconstruction something which is entirely unknowable and absolutely indeterminate, just so long shall we perpetuate moral anachronisms and moral inadequacy. An admirable example of the manner in which supernaturalism confuses and obscures ethical reasoning is afforded by the intellectual confusion and obscure reasoning evident in the theological views of American Christian Socialists as compared with these same writers' logical, lucid, relevant and courageous products when dealing with the purely secular issues involved in modern social justice.

Just the moment we introduce any such conception as Professor Wieman's: "Every good thing that exists, no matter how precious it may seem to be, is inadequate and evil save as it provides a form through which this working of the cosmos can attain through man a higher level of existence," there at once departs any possibility for contact between religion and modern science, natural or social, as well as any possibility for a practical beginning of the sorely needed achievement of ethical reconstruction. If Professor Wieman deplores the fact that the movies and the night clubs are the forces which are now reshaping ethics, no one is more responsible for this fact that those modern theologians who attempt to prevent a secular religion from coöperating with social science in a sensible revamping of our ethical doctrines and practices in harmony with modern knowledge and conditions.

Professor Wieman holds that the great sin is to regard anything on this earth and anything in man's mundane life as the final and ultimate good. The writer would counter with the opinion that it is the unpardonable sin not to do this very thing. The writer holds with the brilliant Chicago philosopher, T. V. Smith, that "there is no good

but human desires and their satisfaction," and that the moral problem is nothing more or less than to secure ever better and more adequate means of satisfying these desires. Further, even if we were to accept Professor Wieman's view that the basis of morality must be the determination to advance God's will in the cosmos, it would be interesting to have him explain just how, specifically and concretely, we are to proceed to discover this will and to translate it into practical guidance for mankind. In short, the *practical futility* of the supernatural theistic approach to ethics is a sufficient condemnation of this position. Many contend that the desire to please God is the indispensable dynamic basis for right living. To the writer, however, in the new cosmic perspective, the assumption that we can be pleasing God in any direct fashion seems such an example of human arrogance as to appear only an amusing vestige of primitive animism. The thought that we may be increasing human happiness and well-being here on earth should certainly be a far stronger incentive to truly ethical behavior.

VI. MISCELLANEOUS GROUPS

We have now considered the leading classes into which modern religion falls in western society. There are a few special groups to which we might call attention in passing. One of the most commendable efforts to adapt religion to the facts and attitudes of modern science appears in the Ethical Culture Movement, founded by Dr. Felix Adler in 1876. Though Dr. Adler and certain other leaders in the group have from time to time revealed somewhat archaic views on certain social and economic questions, particularly those relating to sex, the Ethical Culture Society has, upon the whole, given evidence of

remarkable sincerity, consistency and success in adapting itself to the progress of scientific knowledge and critical thought. The movement cannot be regarded as in any important way in conflict with science, though there are some who would doubt the legitimacy of designating the Ethical Culture Movement as a religious development. They see in it rather a type of social ethics or social philosophy. If, however, Dr. Adler's article in the *Standard* for May, 1929, is to be taken as the final and authoritative statement of the essentials of Ethical Culture, the scientist could scarcely admit the validity of dealing with divinity and spirituality with the air of assurance evidenced by Dr. Adler in treating these categories in this article.

Another group approach religion primarily from the poetic and æsthetic point of view. As a statement of this attitude we can probably do no better than to quote briefly from John Cowper Powys' *The Religion of a Sceptic:*[16]

> It almost seems as if a person's mind has to follow four stages of development before it apprehends the true secret of religion.
>
> The first stage might be called emotional belief. The second might be called metaphysical belief. The third, absolute disillusionment. The fourth, *æsthetic understanding.*
>
> And this last stage implies a recognition that it is by means of the poetry of these slowly accumulated traditions that the existence of man upon the earth is heightened and the confusion of what he undergoes reduced to an endurable pattern.
>
> With regard to the word "æsthetic" in this connection it must not be supposed that what is meant by this expression is a sensuous response to colored windows, to the smell of incense, to fine singing, to gorgeous vestments, to dramatic gestures, to gracious architecture. A response to these things

[16] J. C. Powys, *The Religion of a Sceptic,* pp. 15-18, 49.

is quite as likely to disturb and interrupt the mental attitude I have been describing as to encourage or sustain it.

In fact what one really requires, in order to get the full æsthetic reaction from these ancient usages, is that they should be performed automatically and mechanically, with as little emphasis as possible upon the mere *beauty of ritual.*

The æsthetic sense, to which the true dignity and pathos of religion appeals, is completely unconcerned with the "artistic" element in Christian worship. It is occupied with something much more serious than this. It is occupied with the fact that man has so deeply associated his goings out and comings in, his health and his sickness, his memories and his hopes, with these particular festivals, that they have become the illuminnated marginal hieroglyphs to the very scroll of his Life-Illusion.

They have indeed fallen into their place, along with the remembered landscapes, and the yet more familiar groupings of animals, houses, gardens, streets, as evocative of that vague inherited race-consciousness which comes and goes so mysteriously about certain material things; and which extends backwards so far into the womb of prenatal darkness.

And because these periodic festivals have been associated with the whole secular history of our lives the feeling we have come to entertain about them is something more massive and more natural than any merely ethical emotion.

But it is permitted to all to stand at gaze, for a passing moment, before these weather-worn monoliths of the journey we all have to make. It is permitted to all to use the dogma of the Virgin Birth, the sacrament of Infant Baptism, the ritual of the Burying of the Dead, the great Feasts of Christmas, of Easter, of Pentecost, so as to summon up "remembrance of things past;" so as to mingle some Nepenthe for the evil present; so as to cast some healing premonition over what is yet to be. . . .

If so, one can well understand how it comes about that to those who reject the theological or philosophical view of the Birth of Christ or the Resurrection of Christ, there yet may come a thrill from the old traditional words about these things such as no rational explanation can destroy.

Grant that these things are no more than imaginary cre-

ations of the human mind. They have associated themselves so long with the rarest visions of that mind; they have been used so often, as leaden plummets, to sound the mysterious ocean of nature, that it may well be a marvel if there does not hang about them certain glittering scales and mystic phosphorescence of the unknown Deep.

He would be grossly misinterpreting the spirit of this "apologia" who used its arguments to commit any young man or any young woman to the restraints of a definite religious communion.

But he would be also misunderstanding it who did not realize that the familiar words of the old tradition have become by long usage part of the eternal secular ritual, old as the hills and deep as the roots thereof, by which man has learned to heighten the life of man.

It is obvious that there can be little direct conflict between science and this type of æsthetic interpretation of the Christian Epic. Mr. Powys' frankly admits the mythical nature of all the facts and attitudes involved in the world picture of Christianity. His appreciation of Christianity is in reality poetic and allegorical. It is far from the method of science, but it does not in any direct manner conflict with scientific facts. The main way in which Mr. Powys' attitude would come into conflict with scientific views would be his ignoring of the realistic historical and social facts involved. This poetic approach to Christianity, with its emphasis upon social indifference, overlooks the fact that this poetic imagery is associated with an active cult which has a very definite and comprehensive effect upon existing social organizations and opinions. In the second chapter of this work we indicated at length why one cannot view contemporary Christianity in the same detached manner as he might a collection of illuminated medieval manuscripts.

Next, we may consider Christian Socialism. We cannot intelligently discuss the degree of conflict between Chris-

tian Socialism and natural science, inasmuch as the exponents of Christian Socialism represent a highly heterogeneous class from the standpoint of theology. They run all the way from radical Unitarian Humanists to men like Father Ryan, who are assumedly orthodox in their theological orientation. The question of scientific accuracy, in so far as it arises, is one which touches the social rather than the physical and biological sciences, though issues like birth control certainly touch upon the field of biology. With the Christian Socialists the problem is primarily the degree to which their social reform programs square with the best social and economic science of the day. Even in this regard the Christian Socialists cannot be viewed as a unit. Some of them espouse an advanced brand of socialism like Marxian Communism, while others, who call themselves Christian Socialists, do not favor any program more radical than economic and social coöperation. The one outstanding evidence of a somewhat unscientific and unhistorical attitude is the tendency of such writers to justify their advanced social and economic views on the ground of the precedent and teachings of Jesus. It is obvious that a profound and astute writer upon modern social economics, like Professor Harry Ward, could no more base his doctrines upon the rudimentary economics of Jesus than Einstein could derive his complicated equations from some of the figures which Christ is reputed to have traced in the sand with his index finger.

Lest the Christian Scientists may accuse us of conscious oversight and neglect, we may express our opinion briefly on the question of the conflict between Christian Science and modern science. In the first place, the very title of the sect is a misnomer, for Christian Science is neither Christian nor scientific. It is a crude amalgam of ancient Stoicism, neo-Platonic denial of the material world, mid-nine-

teenth century mesmerism, especially of the vintage of Dr. Quimby who healed Mrs. Eddy, the tortuous phraseology and confused thinking of Mary Baker Eddy and the literary polish of Henry Wiggam. The fact that it works in many cases is no more proof of its validity than the evidence for the efficacy of magical phraseology and verbal intoxication through the ages. Similar techniques have appeared and flourished all down through the historic period. Of course, the most direct and characteristic conflict of Christian Science with modern science appears in the clash between its doctrines and those of modern medicine. The fact that Christian Science effects many cures cannot and need not be denied, but this cannot be regarded as in any sense a proof of the validity of its supernatural therapeutic postulates. The reason for its success is to be found in a study of the psychology of suggestion in general and in an understanding of the nature of the so-called "conversion hysterias" in particular.

Yet, it is probable that there is no more of a conflict between Christian Science and modern science than there is between orthodox Catholicism and Protestantism and science. Christian Science should be allowed to function and flourish without the slightest interference and to proselyte to the height of its powers. It should, likewise, welcome to an equal degree the candid scrutiny of science and critical thought, something which is decidedly not the case today. In proportion to its numerical strength, Christian Science offers a more belligerent and deliberate opposition to criticism than any other modern cult. Further, the fact that the cult maintains a newspaper which treats foreign news more adequately and competently than any other American journal has nothing whatever to do with the compatibility of the cult with the findings of modern science.

VII. MODERN SCIENTISTS AS LIBERAL THEOLOGIANS

We have just considered the matter of the conflict of science and religion from the standpoint of the different classes of religious leaders and the varying levels of religious beliefs. We may now examine the question briefly from the point of view of those scientists who have offered their services as liberal theologians and have declared that there is no conflict between science and religion. Among the best known of these have been the English mathematician, Alfred N. Whitehead, the eminent British biologist, J. Arthur Thomson, the brilliant American physicists, Robert A. Millikan and Michael I. Pupin, the prominent zoologist, Henry Fairfield Osborn, and the active Harvard geologist, Kirtley F. Mather. These men, and many others of their kind, have valiantly proclaimed that there is no conflict between science and religion. The most decisive and lyrical pronouncement is the following statement by Professor Pupin. It is the summary of an interview granted by him to Mr. A. E. Wiggam, the well-known popularizer of modern eugenic doctrine, and published in the latter's *Exploring Your Mind* (pp. 385-6). A more extended view of Professor Pupin's views may be discovered in his *The New Reformation*, but the following summary by Mr. Wiggam will suffice to make clear the tenor of Professor Pupin's views:

Science is making us better Christians.

Science teaches us that the Universe is guided by an intelligent Divinity.

Science is teaching men how to coöperate intelligently with God; it is teaching men what his laws are and how to obey them.

Science is proving that the human soul is the greatest thing in the Universe the supreme purpose of the Creator.

Science is leading us closer and closer to God.

Science has made us better homes and is teaching us how to make a better democracy and a better social life; it is thus preparing us for the greatest spiritual, artistic and intellectual life that men have ever known.

Science does not contradict belief in the immortality of the human soul.

Science is revealing God in greater and greater glory, and teaches us that in time we may possibly even see Him face to face. . . .

President Nicholas Murray Butler, of Columbia University, is reported to have said recently that, while talking with Dr. Pupin, he felt that he was witnessing the curtain being lifted upon a new and brighter world. I believe he would make you feel the same way, and I should like to convey that feeling to you through his own words.

The Reconcilers from the scientific camps support in many ways their contention that there is no conflict between science and religion. One of the most familiar and threadbare of their methods is to enumerate an impressive list of scientists who have been devoutly religious. We have already shown how misleading and unconvincing this device actually proves in relation to the alleged Catholic men of science. It is equally futile to attempt to resolve the conflict between science and religion by calling attention to eminent contemporary scientists of devout inclinations. The fact that a man may be an eminent physicist does not, in itself, entitle him to speak with any more authority upon religious questions than would the possession of an enviable record as a skillful blacksmith or plumber. There are a number of classical examples of internationally-famous physicists and chemists who, with great gusto and pride, continue to conduct Sunday-school classes in orthodox religious circles. A great scientist, who is religious in an orthodox sense, either offers one more example of the notorious capacity of the human mind to compartmental-

ize itself and entertain mutually exclusive conceptions and attitudes, or is an illustration of the one-sided nature of our present-day education, which allows a man to participate in the physics of Einstein and yet share the religious outlook of his Methodist or Baptist grandmother.

Professor James Harvey Robinson, in *Harper's Magazine* for September, 1928, has offered a very ingenious and convincing explanation of the so-called compartmentalized mind, in so far as it relates to the religious question. He holds that the religious beliefs and attitudes of most men tend to remain essentially on an infantile level, while we carry on to an adult stage the development of our psychic life in the field of science, technology, art, literature, and the like. In other words, the pious physicist is a person whose scientific views are on an adult plane, while in the religious field he is intellectually a youth in short pants. We may here quote from Robinson's views:

> Bryan exhibited through his life no more knowledge of religious matters than he could have easily acquired at ten years of age. Sermons of the commoner sort contain only what both preacher and audience accepted before they were grown up. Religion does not tend to mature in most cases. It is what we learned at our mother's knee. In later life we are preoccupied with business and amusement, and there is no time to keep up with the course of religious investigation, even if we had the slightest disposition to do so. Billy Sunday talks as a big husky boy to other boys and girls. Even distinguished scientific men solemnly discuss the relation of religion to science, when, if they but stopped to think, they would find that they were assuming that they know all about religion, without having given it much thought since childhood; although they would readily admit that after a lifetime's work they knew very little about science.

We do not, of course, advocate dismissing sensible statements on religious topics by natural scientists merely be-

cause they may not be experts in the social sciences. What we are opposing is the according of respect to silly dicta by natural scientists simply because they may be competent physicists or geologists.

When one examines the views of Professor Whitehead, particularly as set forth in his *Science and the Modern World* and his *Religion in the Making*, he finds little therein to give comfort to the orthodox. Professor Whitehead candidly indicts historic religions for their savagery:[17]

> History, down to the present day, is a melancholy record of the horrors which can attend religion: human sacrifice, and in particular the slaughter of children, cannibalism, sensual orgies, abject superstition, hatred as between races, the maintenance of degrading customs, hysteria, bigotry, can all be laid at its charge. Religion is the last refuge of human savagery.

Mr. Whitehead's conception of God is a highly abstruse physical notion, in no way resembling even the personified conceptions of the liberal theologians. He pictures God as the function of selection in the universe and his conception of religion in its highest form is what he calls "world loyalty." This attitude, as Professor Bates well remarks is "the last refuge of the poet, the philosopher and the saint." It is evident that the Rev. Dr. Straton could derive but scant satisfaction from this obscure cosmic philosophy. It would mean little more to him than Einstein's statement that he believed in the God of Spinoza meant to Cardinal O'Connell. The chief criticism which may be directed against Professor Whitehead in this matter is that, like so many theologians from the scientific camp, he does not remain consistent. After defining an abstruse God, he frequently lapses into attributing to him many orthodox theistic qualities, thus affording a loophole for the satisfaction of the faithful.

Dr. Thomson seeks to harmonize science and religion by

[17] A. N. Whitehead, *Religion in the Making.*

the well-worn device of holding that science is supreme in the realm of the intellect while religion reigns over the emotions. As Professor Max Otto has well pointed out, this is no solution of the problem at all, for emotions do not function *in vacuo*, but associate their expression with definite beliefs, most of which have, thus far in human history, been contrary to the well-established facts of science. Indeed, the great value of psychological and social science lies in its potential service to the achievement of a scientific control and direction of the emotions. Professor Millikan resolves the conflict between science and religion by redefining religion in such a manner as to divorce it entirely from orthodoxy and to make it the inspirational adjunct of ethical dynamics. It is to be the great psychological stimulant to social well-being. As long as it is kept in general terms, there can be no serious fault found with this suggestion. The difficulty comes in the recognition that this does not alter the fact that there remains a conflict between science and the orthodox cults which Dr. Milliken rules out as true religions. One must remember that for one religious person who accepts Professor Millikan's view of religion as "the great dynamo for injecting into human society the sense of altruism" there are a thousand who enthusiastically espouse the primitive doctrines set forth by Cardinal Hayes and John Roach Straton. We have not the space here to go into detail in discussing the various *obiter dicta* of Professor Millikan in the field of religion. There is no evidence whatever that Dr. Millikan has made any special study of the religious problem and possesses anything like the same authority in this field of social science that he does in mathematics, physics or astronomy. He would properly denounce in unmeasured terms a man who attempted to dogmatize in the field of physics with as little technical knowledge of physics as he himself possesses of social science and religion. Those who

care to examine a devastating attack upon Millikan, Osborn and the like may consult the last three chapters of Joseph McCabe's recent book, *The Story of Religious Controversy.*

Dr. Osborn endeavors to prove that no conflict exists between science and religion by essentially the same means as does Professor Millikan. He strings along the threadbare list of devout scientists and then arbitrarily defines science and religion in such a fashion as to make religion accept the facts of science as a point of departure, something which orthodox religion is singularly loath to do in actual practice. In general, in his apologetic writing, such as *The Earth Speaks to Bryan,* Dr. Osborn repudiates orthodoxy, but outside of his special field of historical zoölogy he exhibits a rather amazing ignorance of the progress and status of biological and philosophic thought. This is something that we are, however, prepared to discover, in the light of his pontifical commendation of so astonishing a combination of historical, anthropological and biological errors as Madison Grant's *The Passing of a Great Race.*

Professor Mather employs another time-honored expedient, namely, that of denominating all the facts and processes of nature as essentially miraculous. He thus gives evidence of a sad lack of information regarding technical theological terms, for a miracle is by definition something which defies not only all existing science but all probable future scientific explanation. Professor Mather errs by confusing the term miraculous with the term impressive. We agree with Professor Mather that much, if not all, of nature is remarkably impressive, as one will perceive by recalling such a masterpiece as Huxley's lecture "On a Piece of Chalk." Yet that is quite a different matter from holding nature to be inexplicable. Moreover, miracles

do not necessarily lead us to God and religion. Even Christian theology admits the power of the Devil to work miracles. Where science is baffled religion certainly can not offer reliable or assured guidance. It would be difficult to discover in an equal number of words a more impressive combination of anthropocentric thought, ignoring of psychology and social science, and faulty logic than Professor Mather has packed into the following paragraph from his article "The God of Science" in the January (1929) *Forum:*

> Man does not live by bread alone. He is not satisfied with mere existence, but curiously yearns and strives to build into his being those non-measurable realities which, having no relation to time or space, are necessarily classed as spiritual rather than material. He seeks a rational system of thought; he tries to create beauty; he gropes after moral law; he idealizes love as something which transcends the sexual passion of the animal. If man, the creature, does these strange things, then God, the creative power, must be doing likewise. Even as our reasoning minds have found response in a rational universe, so our yearning souls are finding response in a spiritual universe.

Professor Mather misunderstands what man is actually doing, and it is certainly incredible presumption on the part of mankind to assume that God must necessarily be engaging in the same type of activity which enlists the interest of a temporary inhabitant of our petty little planet. God may be thus occupied, but proof thereof is conspicuously lacking and the logic of probability equally unconvincing.

With Professor Pupin's pronouncement we need not concern ourselves. It is nothing more than the explosion of a "will-to-believe" which could have been uttered by either Cardinal Hayes or Dr. Straton. It is purely a product of Professor Pupin's subjectivity and entirely incapable of

scientific demonstration. It lets us know quite definitely how Professor Pupin personally feels on the subject of science and religion, but it takes us nowhere at all in getting at the fundamental issues involved. Wishful thinking does not take on the attributes of profound science or critical philosophy merely because it issues from a great laboratory physicist. It is still wishful thinking and nothing more.

In his important book, *The Nature of the Physical World*, the eminent British physicist and astronomer, A. S. Eddington, admits that the new doctrines of electrodynamics do not lead us directly to a formulation of a specific and demonstrable conception of the new cosmic God, but, as a Quaker, he attempts to show how they enable us to elaborate a defense of the old theological conception of free-will or the freedom of human choice. As Bertrand Russell has well insisted, (New York *Nation*, February 20, 1929) Professor Eddington is compelled to make certain gratuitous assumptions in regard to electrodynamics in applying its principles to psychology, but even more important is the fact that the question of the freedom of human choice is not an issue to be solved by an appeal to physics. It must be dealt with in relation to the processes of conditioned-response which are studied by psychology and sociology. If physics does not lead us directly to God, it is as patently evident that it does not lead us to the solution of the fundamental problems of human behavior. These are issues of an order as remote from physics as are the theological problems connected with God. If there can be no "quantum theory of God," as Professor Eddington admits, there can be no quantum theory of human behavior. Scott Buchanan offers a very relevant comment on the mystical aspects of Professor Eddington's doctrines in the *New Student* for March, 1929:

In another mood Mr. Eddington talks about nature being spiritual and argues from our ignorance not only to our free will, but also to the freedom of indeterminism of electrons, and from our partial view of things to an all pervading mind. Mr. Eddington is a Quaker, and that explains everything. He has an inner light which goes out to meet physical light and when they meet somewhere in interstellar space the whole universe is focused in that peculiar combination of poetry, technology and mathematics which we call modern science. . . . This book might well be studied as the contribution of Quakerism to the coming religion of science, and compared with Mr. Whitehead's *Science and the Modern World* as the corresponding contribution of Anglicanism, and with Duhem's *La Système du monde* as the Catholique critique. One need not be religious about one's science, as Mr. Eddington often insists, but since most of us are, it is well that we have competent prophets.

One of the stock arguments of the Devout Modernists and the Reconcilers is the allegation that one quickly reaches the limits of secular knowledge, and hence we must rely upon religion to set us straight about those realms of thought and reality where science is impotent. Professor Millikan states this common position very well in the following citation:[18]

The world is of course "incurably religious." Why? Because everyone who reflects at all *must have* conceptions about the world which go beyond the field of science, that is, beyond the present range of intellectual knowledge. As soon as we get beyond that range we are in the field that belongs to religion, and no one knows better than the man who works in science how soon we get beyond the boundaries of the known.

Professor Roy W. Sellars points out quite correctly that men like Millikan have altogether too restricted a conception of the limits of scientific knowledge, because they tend to identify scientific knowledge with their own narrow

[18] R. A. Millikan, *Evolution in Science and Religion.*

specialty. Professor Sellars makes the following comment upon the above citation from Professor Millikan:[19]

> Really this is a quite astonishing pronouncement. Is physics the only science? How about biology, psychology and sociology? And what about philosophy with its study of the nature of human knowledge and its criticism of the basic concepts in all fields? I wish Millikan had enumerated some of these conceptions which go beyond the field of science. I judge from the rest of the chapter that he had in mind the concepts of purpose, meaning, value, intelligence. But actually none of these go beyond the field of science. It is to take the term *science* too narrowly to exclude them.

It is even more important to emphasize the fact that religion cannot in any sense make a legitimate claim to being able to clear up any problems where science itself is baffled or impotent. In the light of modern knowledge, nothing could be more absurd than to hold that religion can penetrate more deeply into the facts and mysteries of the universe than science and can put us right with respect to those issues which thus far defy scientific analysis. Religion can at best only hope to generalize upon the basis of the facts which have already been discovered by science. No other possible position can be taken, unless one is willing to accept the orthodox notion of both supernatural and human knowledge and the hypothesis of revelation. In short, the honest admission of the scientist that there are still many unsolved problems regarding the physical universe, living matter and social relationships affords no basis whatever for any gleeful rejoicing on the part of the religionists. Only in so far as science reveals new facts in these fields can there be any legitimate hope for further progress in religious thought. In his article in *Harper's Magazine* for March, 1929, Professor Bridgman thus in-

[19] R. W. Sellars, *Religion Coming of Age*, p. 214.

dicates how the destruction of the old physical theories of causality offers no ground whatever for religious mysticism or dogmatism:

> But doubtless by far the most important effect of this revolution will not be on the scientist, but on the man in the street. The immediate effect will be to let loose a veritable intellectual spree of licentious and debauched thinking. This will come from the refusal to take at its true value the statement that it is meaningless to penetrate much deeper than the electron, and will have the thesis that there *is really* a domain beyond, only that man with his present limitations is not fitted to enter this domain. The temptation to deal with the situation in this way is one that not many who have not been trained in careful methods of thinking will be able to resist—one reason is in the structure of language. Thought has a predisposition to certain tendencies merely because of the necessity of expressing itself in words. This has already been brought out sufficiently by the discussion above; we have seen how difficult it is to express in words the fact that the universe fades away from us by becoming meaningless without the implication that there really is something beyond the verge of meaning.
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> The man in the street will, therefore, twist the statement that the scientist has come to the end of meaning into the statement that the scientist has penetrated as far as he can with the tools at his command, and that there is something beyond the ken of the scientist. This imagined beyond, which the scientist has proved he cannot penetrate, will become the playground of the imagination of every mystic and dreamer. The existence of such a domain will be made the basis of an orgy of rationalizing. It will be made the substance of the soul; the spirits of the dead will populate it; God will lurk in its shadows; the principle of vital processes will have its seat here; and it will be the medium of telepathic communication. One group will find in the failure of the physical law of cause and effect the solution of the age-long problem of the freedom of the will; and on the other hand the atheist will find the justification of his contention that chance rules the universe.

The most damaging criticism that can be made of the work of the scientific Reconcilers who have been drawn from the field of the mathematical and the natural sciences is that they are for the most part abysmally ignorant of the social sciences and of the progress which has been made therein with respect to a scientific explanation of religion. In many ways the most crucial conflict between science and religion today is that which resides in the contrast between the traditional explanation of religion and the scientific analysis of religious phenomena. Of this conflict the Reconcilers are for the most part distressingly unaware. This point is well stated by Dr. Randall:[20]

> It is true that many physicists have recently blossomed forth as liberal theologians. Aware that modern physics has abandoned doctrines that were once hostile to religious claims, they imagine that there is no further conflict between religion and science. But they are abysmally ignorant of all that anthropology and psychology have discovered about the nature of religion itself. They are ignorant of the serious philosophies that have built upon such data. They do not realize that the present conflict of religious faith with science is no longer with a scientific explanation of the world, but with a scientific explanation of religion. The really revolutionary effect of the scientific faith on religion today is not its new view of the universe, but its new view of religion. Reinterpretations of religious belief have been unimportant compared with reinterpretations of religion itself. For those who share them, it has become impossible to view religion as a divine revelation entrusted to man. It has even become impossible to see it as a relation between man and a cosmic deity. Religion has rather appeared a human enterprise, an organization of human life, an experience, a social bond and an aspiration.

If the opinions of great physicists and geologists upon religion carry no weight unless such men have made a special study of religion, it is obvious that even less pres-

[20] J. H. Randall, Jr., in *Current History*, June, 1929, p. 360.

tige and authority can attach to the opinions of leading business men on religion, unless they have likewise made a thorough technical study of the problems of religion. John D. Rockefeller may be the world's greatest business genius, but there is not an iota of evidence to support the view that he knows any more about religion today than he did when a boy tending turkeys and attending sunday school at Moravia, New York. Henry Ford is admittedly a consummate industrial leader, but there is no evidence that his erudition in the religious field is any more massive than his learning in history and the social sciences.

We may, then, quite safely conclude that there is a real conflict between science and religion. This conflict can be ended in one of three ways: (1) by the Catholic method of compelling science to accept an inferior position and concede to the Church a monopoly over ultimate wisdom; (2) by arbitrarily defining science and religion in such a fashion as to eliminate the conflict through the evasive ingenuity of terminology; or (3) by adopting a modernized view of religion which takes the methods and facts of science as its point of departure. We may probably accept as an accurate estimate the statement of the Rev. Dr. Karl Reiland of St. George's Episcopal Church in New York City. When speaking at the chapel of Princeton University a few months ago he contended that science is in conflict with about 95 per cent. of what passes for religion today. Dr. Albert C. Dieffenbach may possibly take too gloomy a view of the present situation in his masterly book *Religious Liberty*, wherein he expresses the opinion that Fundamentalism, Catholic and Protestant, has won the battle against science and Modernism. Yet, there can be no doubt of the serious challenge which religious orthodoxy offers to science, critical thought and civilized philosophies of life in twentieth century America. This is the

reason why it is difficult to conceive of a more viciously misleading statement than Dr. Osborn's pronouncement, to the effect that "there is no conflict between science and religion. There is none. There can be none." At the selfsame meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science in which Dr. Osborn made this statement, resolutions were passed protesting against the restrictions on the teaching of natural science and evolution which were contemplated or embodied in the legislation of several states.

While the writer has taken the conciliatory attitude and has maintained the general position that it may be quite possible to work out a religion compatible with the most exacting natural science, he is perfectly aware that many able students challenge this point of view and maintain that there is a perpetual and irreconcilable conflict between science and religion. As an example of this attitude we may quote the following passages from Dr. Clifford Kirkpatrick's *Religion in Human Affairs.* This is probably the most useful book on the subject of religion produced in the last decade, and the author combines to a very unusual degree training in natural science, psychology, history and sociology. Dr. Kirkpatrick's case for the perpetual incompatibility of religion and science follows:[21]

> While admitting the ingenuity and brilliance of attempts such as that of Huxley to reconcile science and religion it may be questioned whether there is not a more real and permanent incompatibility between these two spheres of human experience than is usually admitted. There is perhaps some truth in Croce's contention that religion is immature philosophy and that only a mature philosophy can make a harmonious adjustment to science.
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> We should be on guard, however, against loose use of terms and hasty generalizations. It should be noted that it is rather

[21] C. Kirkpatrick, *Religion in Human Affairs,* pp. 469-472.

the method and philosophy of science than science itself which is incompatible with religion, although the facts of science certainly contradict the belief phase of most religions, especially the Hebrew-Babylonian account of creation and cosmology. Science rests upon certain practical and useful philosophical assumptions and as a rule develops through the efforts of men using certain methods and entertaining certain attitudes. These assumptions, methods, and attitudes are so closely associated with the conceptual system of science itself that the whole sociologically, if not logically, constitutes a single culture pattern. Let us examine some of the contrasts between religion and this culture pattern formed by the union of naturalistic philosophy, the scientific method, and the body of science.

(1) Science is nourished by the active use of the scientific method involving observation, experimentation, induction, deduction, and verification. Religion rests upon passive faith.

(2) Science is based upon the principle of induction which is the assumption that a repetition of events implies a further repetition of these events. Furthermore, in spite of the scepticism of Hume and his follower, Pearson, scientists usually assume an external reality organized in an orderly manner. In brief, science is associated with a philosophy of determinism, the assumption that there are no uncaused phenomena, that given a certain set of conditions a certain result must inevitably follow. Religion, on the other hand, commonly if not invariably implies the existence of powers which interfere by miracle and revelation with the laws of the universe.

(3) Science recognizes no personal powers in the universe responsive to the prayers and needs of men. Belief in mysterious powers which constitutes, according to our definition, the conceptual aspect of religion is usually an animistic belief in personal powers. Science in effect denies the existence of spiritual beings which religion affirms.

(4) Science is critical and agnostic while religion is credulous. The scientist accepts nothing save proven existential facts or fruitful hypotheses, while for the conventionally religious person faith is a virtue and doubt a vice.

(5) Science is based upon disciplined thought which demands exact definitions and precise terms as well as a logical

manipulation of concepts. Religion makes use of vague symbolism and of terms which are suffused with emotion and serve as a means of communicating feeling rather than an intellectual currency.

(6) Science deals only with observations, that is to say, existential facts and their relationships rather than with judgments or values. Religion, on the other hand, in common with philosophy, deals with values. Dean Inge would deny this point, claiming that the attributes of ultimate reality are values and that even science is based on such values as coherence, uniformity and commensurability. As has been previously pointed out, culture patterns such as that of religion merge into one another and yet there is a difference of no small degree between science and religion in this respect.

(7) Science represses rationalization, wishful thinking and the various forms of bias, while religion gives expression to such attitudes and modes of thought.

(8) The thought content of science is dynamic, ever changing in the direction of new harmonies. Religious belief tends to harden into dogma and to remain static even in the face of changing conditions.

(9) In its emotional aspects likewise, the naturalistic-scientific culture pattern stands contrasted to that of religion. With scientific achievement there comes an expansion of the ego, a sense of triumph at having wrested from nature some of her cherished secrets. It is true that Newton pictured himself as a child picking up the brighter pebbles along the shores of the vast ocean of truth, and scientists of a mystical turn of mind have entered into humble communion with nature. Nevertheless, in religion there tends to be a greater contraction of the ego and reverence passes readily to awe, self-abasement, a feeling of loss of personality and of absolute dependence. One might venture a guess that scientists tend to the extrovert, and the religiously-minded to the introvert type, but this is mere speculation with vague terms.

(10) The scientist while aware of the wondrous in the universe is inclined to deny the existence of mystery and seeks to remove it in so far as possible by research. Religion on the other hand is bathed in mystery which it often cherishes for its own sake.

(11) In regard to overt behavior as well as thought and feeling, science stands in contrast to religion. The scientist moving calmly among the instruments of his laboratory hardly reminds one of a participant in a Saturnalian orgy or even of the priest presiding over the miracle of transubstantiation. Ritual, on the other hand, deals with objects and processes steeped in emotional value. Even if the ritual be lifeless and devoid of its original emotional appeal it still stands contrasted to scientific procedure in that it is stereotyped and formal, while experimental methods are ever changing in response to the new problems on the frontier of knowledge.

If it be objected that these contrasts do not mean incompatibility, since science and religion have coexisted and scientists have been religious, it is necessary to define the term incompatibility more closely. Within the individual personality two patterns of thought, feeling and overt behavior are incompatible when there is mental conflict and reciprocal modification of the systems under conditions in which the patterns are not dissociated or compartmentalized one from another. If the biologist who is an evolutionist, a mechanist and a thoroughgoing determinist in his laboratory is, while in church, a believer in special creation, the Virgin Birth, miracles and bodily resurrection of the dead, it is only because two aspects of his personality are separated. If brought into contact in the course of discussion or during preparation of a statement of his views, a reorganization would be necessary.

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Chapter VIII

THE JESUS STEREOTYPE

The subtlest and most pervasive of all influences are those which create and maintain the repertory of stereotypes. We are told about the world before we see it. We imagine most things before we experience them. And those preconceptions, unless education has made us acutely aware, govern deeply the whole process of perception.

(Walter Lippmann)

I. THE IMPORTANCE OF THE JESUS QUESTION IN RELIGIOUS RECONSTRUCTION

In circles which may be in any sense regarded as contemporaneously-minded, there is no doubt whatever that the Jesus question is by all odds the most important phase of modern religious controversy. There are three major lines of defense of the Christian religion. The first is the assumption of the inerrant and infallible nature of the Bible. The second is the dogma of the cosmic logic and complete perfection of the Christian religion. The third is the hypothesis of the uniqueness of Christ as a religious leader. This last contention extends all the way from the Fundamentalist assumption of the Virgin Birth and complete deity of Jesus to the Modernist contention that Jesus was a unique and perfect type of human religious teacher. The Modernists have absolutely surrendered the first line of defense, and the great majority of them have abandoned the second. Yet all except a few of the advanced Unitarian Humanists and an occasional radical preacher

from other denominations cling to the thesis of the uniqueness of Jesus as tenaciously as any Fundamentalist. As Professor Edwin A. Burtt has observed in his excellent work, *Religion in an Age of Science:*[1]

> Drive a religious man of liberal persuasion today away from every other tenet that used to be held fundamental in the Christian philosophy of history, and he will come back to one point of historic fixity which he feels must be insisted upon as absolute. There is something in Jesus of Nazareth which is ultimate, to be maintained without reservation and never surrendered. If it is not his deity it is his divinity (a distinction which at one stage of recent theological discussion was of considerable moment); if it is not his divinity it is his unique leadership in the spiritual enterprise of humanty. Detach a pious soul from something final in the historic Jesus and he is lost, religiously speaking.

The lengths to which even scholarly and urbane Modernists will go in their claims for the uniqueness of Jesus is truly astonishing. In a recent learned work, *The Spiritual Element in History*, the Rev. Dr. Robert W. McLaughlin examines the evidence for the operation of the hand of God in history. He rejects all of the traditional arguments for the divine control of the trend of history and preserves a commendable objectivity until he comes upon the issue of the doctrines of Jesus. These impress him as so unique and perfect that they alone are sufficient to convince him that God has really played a definitive part in human history. We reproduce herewith his summary confession of faith:[2]

> In the meantime we accept the assumption of God in history as an act of faith—faith in Christ. This seems to me reasonable. To take any other position would be utterly unreasonable. For in history the two astounding events are the

[1] Burtt, *op. cit.*, p. 134.

[2] McLaughlin, *op. cit.*, p. 308.

absolute perfection of his character and the absolute perfection of his teaching. These two unparalleled facts in history give to anything Christ may say about history an authority beyond any passing authority possessed by the scribes either in the first or the twentieth century. Because of these two facts, when Christ affirms a truth that I cannot demonstrate, I accept the affirmation as an act of faith, even the affirmation that God is in history.

We even find an enlightened Unitarian divine, Dr. John Clarence Petrie, proclaiming in the *Christian Register* for May 23, 1929, that Jesus is a veritable symbol and witness of God. Dr. Petrie complains that: "Today a generation of Unitarians that no longer finds God in the face of Jesus Christ, no longer find him in their own hearts nor in the outer universe." It is obvious that Dr. Petrie has in mind the views of Dr. Dietrich and the Unitarian Humanists.

In his writings on social and political psychology, the able American publicist, Mr. Walter Lippmann, has coined a term of great utility in the interpretation of human thought. This term is the word "stereotype," by which Mr. Lippmann means a mental image of a person, thing or concept which we substitute for the reality. We retain this stereotype unless we are forced by some unusual circumstance to abandon the old imagery and approach the matter at issue in a direct and realistic manner, thus making our view of it approximate the actuality. Most of our thinking is done in terms of these stereotypes, for few of us get an opportunity to undertake a realistic examination of all the personalities, material things and concepts that are brought within our range of experience through reading, conversation and the like. The attitude of Mr. Bryan or Dr. Straton toward the Bible is an admirable example of stereotyped thinking. Due to his experience and training, Bryan had developed a definite Bible stereo-

type which embraced the notion of its complete infallibility. Having had no opportunity or inclination to carry on a thorough-going inquiry into the actual nature of the Bible, he preserved this stereotype intact from his youth until his death. The Modernists view with amused contempt all exhibitions of this Fundamentalist stereotype in regard to the Bible, but it is the painful duty of the writer to state his belief that the conception of Jesus held by the general run of American Modernists is as notorious an example of stereotyped thinking as any of the testimony of Mr. Bryan regarding the Bible in the course of the Dayton Trial of 1925.

This is true not only of the rank and file of Modernists but even of their recognized and more radical leaders. We may illustrate by a few examples in point. The most forceful preacher in American Modernism is unquestionably Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick. He is particularly interested in utilizing religion as a technique for the more complete development of the human personality. Certainly no practitioner of religion could have a more laudable or worthy objective. Further, Mr. Fosdick is a member of the National Committee for Mental Hygiene and respectably acquainted with the literature of modern psychology and psychiatry. Yet, instead of turning to this material as the best source of guidance in his religious program, Mr. Fosdick recurs to Jesus as the supreme example of the personal life. Writing in *Harper's Magazine* for April, 1929, he says:

> The gist of what the church has meant by the Divinity of Jesus lies in the idea that, if God is to be symbolized by personal life, he should be symbolized by the best personal life we know. The interpretation of the Spiritual World in terms of personality and the interpretation of personality in terms of Christ—that is in brief the summary of Christian theology.

The fact is, of course, that it is Dr. Fosdick and not Jesus who is interested in the question of personality and its promotion and realization. Further, Dr. Fosdick is infinitely better fitted to handle any phase of the problem of personality than was Jesus. Therefore, he only weakens an admirable enterprise and a commendable program by linking it up with Jesus and trying to justify it on the basis of the teachings of Jesus.

Most informed observers of contemporary trends in American religious life would probably agree that the six men who are in the vanguard of those seeking to apply religion to the reconstruction of social life are Kirby Page, Sherwood Eddy, Harry Ward, Jerome Davis, Reinhold Niebuhr and Francis J. McConnell. Others might be mentioned in the same group, but this sextette is certainly conspicuous for its leadership and activity. Kirby Page is the outstanding Christian opponent of war and militarism in the United States, and he has also done notable work in promoting the cause of social and economic justice. He has read widely and traveled extensively. No living person is better able to discuss the question of war and peace on the basis of his own authority. Yet, Mr. Page founds his pacifist program upon the alleged teachings of Jesus, which in this field are more than usually fragmentary and contradictory. In other words, Kirby Page, scholar and student, an observer of the greatest and most terrible war in human history and of the unprecedented movements for world peace which have followed in its wake, turns for his inspiration and guidance to scanty and perhaps non-authentic passages from the hypothetical teachings of an obscure Palestinean peasant who had never witnessed or read of a first-class war and who had never seen any soldiers except perchance a few straggling Romans who had been assigned to the policing of Palestine and Jerusalem.

Mr. Page is not especially in need of inspiration or information from others, but if he were able to divest himself of the Jesus stereotype he would recognize that a man like Professor James T. Shotwell could offer him more cogent and reliable information on questions of war and peace in one hour than the most industrious and conscientious student could discover in the entire Bible. Mr. Page has also just brought out one of the most striking books in the history of religious literature in America. It is entitled *Jesus or Christianity?*, and represents the most thorough-going and sincere indictment of organized Christianity which it has ever been the privilege of the writer to examine. Mr. Page calls upon Americans to abandon this hoary caricature of the true religion of Jesus and to return to the latter, apparently oblivious to the fact that Mr. Page himself is an infinitely better informed and more trustworthy guide to religious reconstruction than Jesus and all the Old Testament prophets combined.

Among all those engaged in attempting to make religion a revolutionary force in American society, leadership would unquestionably have been accorded to Mr. Sherwood Eddy. Few men now living can boast of so wide and varied a personal experience as Mr. Eddy. He has engaged in practically every form of religious endeavor and has traveled widely throughout the world as missionary and student. He has observed all kinds of labor conditions and social situations, and he has counselled long and frequently with the foremost socio-economic experts now alive. Therefore, his own views on modern social and economic conditions should command infinitely more respect than those of Jesus, who lived a very restrained and provincial existence in a distinctly backward economy. Yet Mr. Eddy attempts to justify his brave struggle for social justice on the ground that it conforms to the teachings of

Jesus, who could no more have carried on an intelligent conversation on social and economic problems with Sidney Webb, Paul Douglas or Thorstein Veblen than he could have interpreted the most abstruse formulæ of Einstein. We reproduce herewith the authoritative summary of Mr. Eddy's noble principles of Christian Socialism, which embody a splendid conception of human altruism and social reform but are justified through an appeal to "Jesus' Way of Life":

Believing in Jesus' way of life and in his all-inclusive principle of love as the full sharing of life, I therefore determine to apply this principle in all the relationships of life:

(1) To live simply and sacrificially, avoiding waste and luxury. To make the purpose of my life the making of men rather than the making of money. Not to grow rich in a poor world by laying up treasures for myself but to share all with my fellow men. To apply the golden rule in all my relationships.

(2) To practice brotherhood toward all. To remember that every human being is a person of infinite worth, deserving the fullest opportunity for self-development. To participate in no secret order or fraternity if it tends to exclusiveness, prejudice or strife. To seek justice for every man without distinction of caste or color.

(3) To make peace where there is strife; to seek to outlaw war, "the world's chief collective sin," as piracy and slavery have already been outlawed, substituting a positive program of international justice and good will.

(4) To redeem the social order; to test its evils by the principle of love and fearlessly to challenge them as Jesus challenged the money-changers in the temple. To endeavor to replace them by the constructive building of the new social order, the Kingdom of God on earth. If a student, to apply this purpose immediately to the problems of our campus; to seek education as training for service rather than the mere enjoyment of privilege, the attainment of grades or the achievement of cheap "success"; to tolerate no dishonest practices in classroom, athletics or college elections; to maintain

no relationships with my fellows, men or women, which violate absolute purity or debase the divine value of personality. Since I realize my inability to achieve this way of life unaided:

(5) To seek a new discovery of God which will release within my life new springs of power such as men in the past have experienced when they rediscovered the religion of Jesus.

In order to carry out this five-fold purpose, I will seek immediately to associate myself with others for the purpose of study and experimentation in the realization of Jesus' way of life.

With nearly all of Mr. Eddy's program we heartily concur but we should like to have Mr. Eddy speak on his own authority and abandon his palpably hopeless effort to discover a consistent and relevant social philosophy in the teachings of Jesus and to apply this to conditions quite different from ancient Palestine in the first half century of the Christian era. If Mr. Eddy were to speak on his own authority his doctrines would certainly gain much wider support from the progressive youth of America, who admire his courage, energy and sanity, but are repelled by what seem to them evidence of lack of historic sense and logical consistency in founding his appeal upon the uncertain, vague and contradictory notions of a very obscure religious teacher in a long past stage of civilization.

Professor Harry Ward has for a generation commanded the respect and admiration of all those who are interested in making the United States a more decent and civilized area in which to dwell. He has recently brought out a book entitled, *Our Economic Morality and the Ethic of Jesus.* This book has been characterized by Professor John H. Gray as "the most philosophical, the most logical, and the most profound criticism of what is called capitalism yet to appear. It displaces Tawney and the Webbs." The writer is inclined to agree with this eulogistic estimate by Professor Gray. Yet this extremely well-informed present-

day professor in one of the most advanced theological seminaries in the country attempts to justify his work on the basis of its alleged compatibility with the teachings of Christ and he pleads for a reconstruction of social and economic life in harmony with the doctrines of Jesus. It is difficult to conceive of a more preposterous proposition than for one of the ablest living critics of the modern economic order to appeal to the sanction of a man who had never seen a machine, a factory, or a real city and who was as ignorant of the Ricardian law of rent as he was of Veblen's doctrine of absentee ownership or Ripley's discussions of stock distribution and corporate control. It is as absurd as it would be for Michaelson to justify his experiments in regard to the speed of light by an appeal to some of Jesus' observations relative to his being the "light of the world." We feel exactly as does Paul Blanshard, who thus expresses himself in a friendly review of Professor Ward's book in the New York *Nation* for July 10, 1929:

> What I object to in his treatment is the constant dragging in of "the ethic of Jesus." Is it necessary for a professor in a theological seminary to pretend that a sound economic morality must come from Jesus? Anyone who reads the Gospels with an impartial eye will discover that Jesus' teaching concerning economic values was confused, fragmentary, and quite inapplicable to a world of tickers, billionaires, and communists. What Mr. Ward really means by the "ethic of Jesus" is the ethic of Harry F. Ward, and I don't see why he should be so modest about saying so.

It is, perhaps, worth noting that Mr. Blanshard, like the writer of the present book, was once as much a victim of the Jesus stereotype as Professor Ward. This simply goes to show how absurd the stereotype appears to one, once he is conscious of its existence and nature.

Among the younger social revolutionaries in the Christian Church, Reinhold Niebuhr occupies a dominating position. No other American theologian is so well read in the literature of the inter-relationship between religion and economic philosophy. His writings on various aspects of American social and economic problems have attracted widespread attention by virtue of the singular courage and evident sincerity of the author. Yet in his work, *Does Civilization Need Religion?*, we find him referring to "the absolute nature of the ethics of Jesus and the perfect harmony between his religion and his ethics." He quite evidently places his hope for the reconstruction of religion and society in the possibility of reviving and applying the teachings of Jesus to the conditions of modern life.

There is no doubt that of all the radical Christian social reformers in conventional academic ranks Dr. Jerome Davis is the most fearless and outspoken. He has taken his stand against every form of vested hypocrisy and injustice from preparedness to shop-unions. He has dared to indict the church as an adjunct of business cupidity before the largest gatherings of powerful clergymen. He has further possessed the courage to beard President Lowell in his very den and to declare, as a member of the Harvard Summer School staff, that he could find no evidence whatever of the guilt of Sacco and Vanzetti. The holder of the doctorate in sociology and economics from America's most distinguished graduate school, he has supplemented his local studies by extensive travels abroad, and is particularly well acquainted with the new régime in Russia, which he has had the courage to describe with honesty and candor. He has, though a young man, built up for himself a creditable record as an author and editor. Few men are better fitted to offer constructive criticism of contempo-

rary social institutions. Yet we find him, in his *Christianity and Social Adventuring*, proclaiming:

> Let us bring every problem, every individual, face to face with the dynamic love of Jesus. Let us begin now to translate our theoretical love for the working man into action, begin now to really build the industrial order over according to the blue-print of Jesus.

For a man like Jerome Davis to invoke the "blue-print of Jesus" is not less ridiculous than it would be for Dr. William A. White to espouse Jesus' technique of casting out devils as the basis for a reconstructed therapy at St. Elizabeth's Hospital for the Insane.

Unquestionably the outstanding figure among the forces making for decency in the Methodist Church is Bishop Francis J. McConnell. Almost single-handed he has been able to preserve respect for a denomination which includes in its membership such fanatical dervishes as Bishop W. F. McDowell, President of the Methodist Board of Temperance, Prohibition and Public Morals, Bishop Thomas Nicholson, President of the Anti-Saloon League, and Bishop James Cannon of Virginia, one of the most irreconcilable of the Drys and recently famed for his Wall street ventures. Bishop McConnell took a leading part in sponsoring the most courageous and effective clinical publication thus far brought out in the United States under religious auspices, namely, the Report of the Inter-Church World Movement on the Steel Strike of 1919. This he did, though at the time he was Bishop in the Pittsburgh diocese. As a leader in the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ, he has been one of the most powerful influences in that organization in support of social justice and world peace. Yet we find him contending that the essentials of Christianity consist in proving that the values

which Christianity sees in Christ also hold good for God. From every point of view the Bishop is better fitted than Jesus to guide modern religious and social reconstruction. Nothing better could happen to American religion than for the progressive young divines in Methodism to forget about Jesus, except in so far as they might recall him after the fashion of Zoroaster or Buddha, and seek their inspiration in the life and doctrines of Bishop McConnell.

In pointing out these amazing estimates of Jesus on the part of our Modernist leaders the writer should not be regarded as criticizing the work of the six men whom he has singled out. They are all men whom the writer greatly admires, and if there are more useful Americans, he is not aware of their identity. What the writer is engaged in criticizing is their astonishing views of Jesus and his relation to modern problems. Any one of them is incomparably superior to Jesus as a guide to both religious and social reconstruction. Moreover, they have all led much more interesting and instructive lives than did Jesus, and, so far as we know, all of them are much more impressive personalities than Jesus.

Perhaps more illuminating is the reluctance of even many Religious Radicals to surrender a traditional view of Jesus and to treat him as they would any other secular religious teacher. One of the most courageous and straightforward books which has been written in our generation on the religious problem is the work of the distinguished radical clergyman, John Herman Randall and his son, the brilliant philosopher, John Herman Randall, Jr., entitled *Religion and the Modern World.* We find the authors proclaiming that "Jesus was beyond question a truly great moral genius. . . . He stands out as a supreme ethical teacher, perhaps the greatest in our tradition." Yet the authors proceed immediately to what is, so far as the writer is

aware, the most devastating brief demonstration of the essential irrelevance of Jesus' teachings for the modern world. Among other things, they point out that: "The teachings of Jesus are intelligible only in the light of his belief in the supernatural Messiah and the cataclysmic coming of the Kingdom of God." In other words, his teachings are intelligible only upon the basis of an hypothesis which renders his doctrines essentially irrelevant not only for social reconstruction in our own day, but even for realistic social and religious programs in his own time. Further, the authors put the quietus for all time upon the basic thesis of men like Sherwood Eddy, who would found their complex program of social reconstruction upon some of the simple precepts assigned to Jesus with reference to love and kindliness:[3]

> It is amazing how many still believe that a general formula like the Golden Rule can suffice to straighten out all the ethical tangles of a complex industrial society, or that the conceptions of justice enunciated by Hebrew prophets for a simple peasant folk twenty-five hundred years ago are calculated to present the intricate and detailed social guidance men are today struggling to work out.

It is not easy to see just how these scholarly and sensible views of Jesus can well be harmonized with the notion that Jesus was the greatest moral teacher in the history of western society.

Equally cogent is the example of the late Robert Keable, who has brought out one of the most interesting books on Jesus, entitled *The Great Galilean*. This attracted much attention and wide comment when originally published in part in the *Atlantic Monthly* in the autumn of 1928. Bringing into clear relief the facts long known to scholars regarding the paucity of knowledge as to Jesus' life and

[3] Randall, *op. cit.*, p. 221.

teachings, he shows plainly the ridiculous nature of the great mass of the lives of Jesus from Renan to Bruce Barton. Attacking the traditional lives of Jesus, he makes it clear that sheer lack of information about Jesus precludes any possibility of a precise and definitive estimate of Jesus' career and doctrines. Yet he follows this splendid critical section by an effort to portray what he describes as "a common-sense Jesus," thus abandoning all the fundamental considerations and principles which he has so clearly laid down in the earlier portion of his book. He even expresses himself as of the opinion that: "Jesus was undoubtedly a spiritual genius of the highest order—as we Westerners have a right to think, the greatest spiritual genius that the world has ever seen."

What we have, of course, in the picture of the common-sense Jesus is much more of an unconscious portrayal of the personality of Mr. Keable himself than an analysis of the character of Jesus. We agree thoroughly with the comments on the book offered by the reviewer in the *Canadian Forum* for July, 1929:

> We are ready, to be sure, to allow the validity of the author's distinction between the Traditional and the Historical Christ; but once you have reduced the "definitely historical facts" to about three lines of a *Times* obituary notice, you cannot then proceed, as the author does, to draw a picture of the Great Galilean at large from all four Gospels wherever the text happens to be useful. Moreover, there is more at some points of the author himself in the picture than there is of Jesus, particularly in the chapter on "Christ and Sex." Even if we admit that the Church has been narrower in this respect than Jesus himself, it is going much too far to extract from anything Jesus ever said or did, support for a modern gospel of free love. Yet this is what Mr. Keable does—tempering the shock by assuring us that "Free love does not mean promiscuous lust!" The fact is that the author does not after all give us the historical Jesus, and even so far as he does, he leaves

him less entitled to the attribute of greatness than he seems to realize. Jesus, he tells us, had no special knowledge of God. His characteristic thought about God—that of the Fatherhood —was a sheer guess, and it was "a guess that was wrong." Well, if it was, it was; but *if* it was, there is no use in going on speaking of Jesus as "a spiritually minded genius," "a spiritual genius of the highest order . . . the greatest spiritual genius that the world has ever seen." If Jesus was wrong in the very thought by which He lived, and from which issued alike His ethic and His actions, then he was no religious genius, but a tragically deluded and deluding dreamer.

After leaving us with a Jesus like this we are invited still to worship the idealized Jesus of Tradition. We need him. We are justified, indeed, in singing to Him "Jesus, lover of my soul."

The most dynamic influence in American theology today is Dr. Albert C. Dieffenbach, editor of the *Christian Register*, and a distinguished Unitarian clergyman. He is more absorbed in theological reconstruction than any other American Modernist, and when he talks about reconstruction he really means it. His *Religious Liberty: the Great American Illusion*, is the most courageous and capable assessment of American religious tendencies which has thus far been produced. It is an indictment not only of Fundamentalism but likewise of the vacillations, hesitations and surrenders of Devout Modernism. Yet we find even Dr. Dieffenbach (*op. cit.*, p. 4) basing his plea for religious liberty upon the example of the "pure spirituality of Jesus" and apparently regarding Jesus as the great herald and champion of the "world of freedom." As an actual matter of fact, there is more theological dynamite in Dr. Dieffenbach's own book than in the entire Bible from cover to cover. As a competent exponent of religious liberty, Jesus ranks as much below Dr. Dieffenbach as he does below the late Emil Fischer as an organic chemist.

We may further cite the illuminating example of Albert

Schweitzer. In his *Quest of the Historical Jesus*, Schweitzer portrays Jesus as the obscure product of an absurd eschatology. Yet he then turns about and lavishes reverential praise upon Jesus as a unique and peerless religious teacher.

The Jesus issue is not merely a matter of scholarly curiosity or of interest solely to the critically-minded scholar and philosopher. It is one of the most important practical problems involved in the religious reconstruction of today. We can never have an intelligent and satisfactory modernized religion until the Jesus stereotype is forever laid at rest. As long as our religious leaders revert to the doctrines of an antique mind, which was itself singularly uninformed, as the source of their inspiration and guidance, we are bound to remain in a period of religious confusion and stagnation. Educated and critically-inclined individuals, particularly among the youth of the land, can no longer be brought in great numbers to the support of an appeal which seems to them based upon foundations that challenge their historical knowledge and their sense of intellectual integrity. The critical exercises necessary to expose the lack of validity in the Jesus stereotype of either the Fundamentalist or the Modernist are simple indeed, but the depth and strength of this stereotype—probably unequalled by any other in Christian civilization—well-nigh excludes the possibility of critical insight on this issue.

The writer's own experience enables him to appreciate the potency of this particular stereotype. He thoroughly familiarized himself with the essentials of biblical scholarship when an undergraduate and then abandoned completely the traditional view of the nature and authorship of the Bible. In graduate work he specialized in the history of religious thought in the departments of anthropology,

history and sociology at Columbia University, being subjected, among other things, to the amazing erudition of James T. Shotwell and Alexander A. Goldenweiser and the devastating irony of James Harvey Robinson and Franklin H. Giddings. Yet it was not until the writer had attained to a full professorship in history in one of the most distinguished American universities and was giving graduate instruction in intellectual history that his Jesus stereotype was finally and completely demolished. The writer had continued to declare glibly in his lectures that the admitted facts concerning the nature of the Bible and the life of Jesus did not necessarily impair his status as a unique religious teacher. It so happened, however, that in his course on Intellectual History at Clark University there was numbered among his students a brilliant ex-Unitarian minister, Dr. Andrew Fish. The latter challenged the lecturer's statement as to the unique qualities of Jesus as a religious and moral leader with such cogency, precision and persistence that any further adherence to this point of view was henceforth quite impossible. Yet the fact that the writer, with none too reverent an attitude at the outset, required a decade of exposure to almost unparalleled critical and scholarly resources for a dissolution of his Jesus stereotype gives him a certain amount of understanding and tolerance with respect to our Modernist clergymen whose Jesus stereotype is rarely challenged by their life experiences or the conversation of their associates. Indeed, it is much more likely than not to be strengthened in the course of their life duties and activities. In addition, they have a vested interest to defend it, though the writer is willing to concede that in the great majority of cases Modernists defend their Jesus stereotype on the basis of honest conviction rather than consciously discerned professional interests.

II. WAS JESUS AN HISTORIC FIGURE?

In the light of the multitude of books which have been written about the life and teachings of Jesus, some of them devoted to a minute analysis of his views on some specific topic or to an elaborate description of a particular period of his life or phase of his personality, it may surprise some readers to learn that anyone has ever seriously questioned the actual historicity of Jesus. Even well-known historical scholars have frequently revealed curious misconceptions about the actual evidence for the life and teaching of Jesus. For example, the chairman of the department of history in one of our largest and most distinguished universities, who had himself written his doctoral thesis on an aspect of late Roman history, declared emphatically to the members of the Newman Club of that institution that there was just as convincing evidence regarding the historicity of Jesus as exists with respect to the historicity of Augustus Cæsar. The validity of this pronouncement can be more adequately judged after we have examined the existing evidence for the life and teachings of Jesus. As a matter of fact, the evidence for the point of view that Jesus was actually an historic character is so slight that a considerable number of the most distinguished students of New Testament times have declared Jesus to be a mythological personage, the outgrowth of the myth-making tendencies common to religious peoples of all ages and particularly prevalent in the period of the early Roman Empire. Among the more eminent scholars and critics who have contended that Jesus was not an actual historic figure we may mention Bruno Bauer, Kalthoff, Drews, Stendel, Felder, Deÿe, Jensen, Lublinski, Bolland, Van der Berg, Virolleaud, Couchoud, Massey, Bossi,

Niemojewski, Brandes, Robertson, Mead, Whittaker, Carpenter and W. B. Smith. While the writer does not concur in the extremely critical position taken by this group of writers, the very fact that so large a group of eminent scholars can earnestly maintain their thesis indicates how fragmentary and fragile is the actual evidence supporting the historical reality of Jesus Christ.

We may now proceed to examine directly the actual documentary evidence for the life of Jesus. This evidence may be divided into two classes: non-Christian and Christian. Of the former, next to nothing exists. In all, this evidence mounts up to some twenty-four lines, not a single one of which is of admitted authenticity. There are four references altogether in non-Christian sources, three from Roman writers and one from the Jewish historian Josephus. In Tacitus' *Annals*, (XV, 44), written about 117 A.D., we find the following brief reference to Christ and the Christians:

> In order to suppress the rumor, Nero falsely accused and punished with the most acute tortures persons who, already hated for their shameful deeds, were commonly called Christians. The founder of that name, Christus, had been put to death by the procurator, Pontius Pilate, in the reign of Tiberius; but the deadly superstition, though repressed for a time, broke out again, not only through Judea, where this evil had its origin, but also through the city (Rome) whither all things horrible and vile flow from all quarters and are encouraged. Accordingly, first those were arrested who confessed; then on their information a great multitude were convicted not so much of the crime of incendiarism as of hatred of the human race.

Professor Drews believes this passage is a forgery, chiefly on the ground of its reference to a great multitude of Christians in Rome, in the year 64 A.D. the date of the incidents in the reign of Nero referred to in this passage.

It is quite obvious that there could not have been any great number of Christians in Rome at this time. Tacitus' contemporary, the historical biographer Suetonius, says in his *Lives of the Twelve Cæsars* (*Claudius* 25): "He (Claudius) expelled from Rome the Jews, because they were constantly raising a tumult at the instigation of Chrestus." This passage is questioned by the ultra-critical on the ground that there was not likely to have been serious sectarian agitation in Rome before the year 54 A.D., the date of the death of Claudius. It is further pointed out that Chrestus was a common Greek name and may not have referred in any way to Jesus. Pliny the Younger was a contempary of both Tacitus and Suetonius. Writing to the Emperor Trajan from Asia Minor about the year 112 A.D. (*Epistles* X, 97), he made the following statement about the Christians:

> They affirmed that the sum of their guilt or error was to assemble on a fixed day before daybreak, and sing responsively a hymn to Christ as to a god, and to bind themselves with an oath not to enter into any wickedness or commit thefts, robberies, or adulteries, or falsify their work, or repudiate trusts committed to them: when these things were ended it was their custom to depart, and, on coming together again (probably in the evening for the love-feast), to take food, men and women together, yet innocently.

This reference has been challenged by some critics, mainly on the ground that the context is not of the sort which would be likely to be the subject of an exchange between Pliny and the Emperor. Whatever the authenticity of these three passages, it is evident that even if they are all to be accepted it means that the total pagan testimony as to the historicity of Jesus boils down to three vague and brief references written a century after the reputed time of Jesus.

The reference from Josephus is found in his *Jewish Antiquities* (XVIII, 3) and reads as follows:

> About this time lived Jesus, a wise man, if indeed he should be called man. He wrought miracles, and was a teacher of those who gladly accept the truth, and had a large following among the Jews and pagans. He was the Christ. Although Pilate, at the complaint of the leaders of our people, condemned him to die on the cross, his earlier followers were faithful to him. For he appeared to them alive again on the third day, as god-sent prophets had foretold this and a thousand other wonderful things of him. The people of the Christians, which is called after him, survives until the present day.

This passage from Josephus, written sometime between 75 and 100 A.D., is admitted even by conservative and pious scholars to be quite obviously spurious. No Jew who rejected Christianity could possibly have written in this vein. It is obviously a late Christian interpolation. It may have replaced an unfavorable reference to Jesus in the original. Philo, the most learned and brilliant Jewish scholar of his day, has nothing whatever to say in regard to Jesus and the Christians. There is, therefore, in extant Jewish literature of the first century A.D. not a single authentic line making reference to Jesus.

We may now pass to a discussion of the Christian sources relative to the life of Jesus. The earliest New Testament documents are the Epistles of St. Paul written between 47 and 54 A.D. In these Epistles there are frequent references to Jesus and his doctrines, but they are of practically no historical value as bearing upon the life of Jesus. There is no evidence that Paul ever saw or listened to Jesus during his ministry. Further, Paul was not friendly with or sympathetic toward the actual Apostles, and hence made no effort to exploit his opportunities to learn about Jesus after his conversion to Christianity. Again,

Paul was not interested in the historical Christ. He formulated his doctrines in isolation upon the basis of his own theology and religious program, assigning the origin of his views to Jesus occasionally, only for the purpose of giving them greater prestige. When he refers to Jesus it is more a theological gesture than a literal historical reference. For example, in First Corinthians, he says in regard to the Eucharist: "For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered unto you, how that the Lord Jesus, in the night in which he was betrayed took bread. . . ." The casual reader would assume that Paul had literally received his directions to establish the Lord's Supper directly from Jesus, but we actually know that Paul acted independently and that the accounts of the Last Supper which we find in the Synoptic Gospels are based upon Paul's memorandum in First Corinthians. Paul's references to receiving directions from the Lord did not, then, imply historical continuity with the teachings of Jesus or the actual Apostles but rather, as Conybeare remarks, really meant "One of the private revelations to which he was liable." In short, Paul is rather worse than useless as an historical source relative to the actual life and teachings of Jesus. He apparently knew little or nothing about the real life of Jesus and he frequently gives a quite false impression by ascribing to Jesus what were actually his own theological inspirations and missionary aspirations. The distinguished English scholar, the late Frederick Cornwallis Conybeare, quoted above, thus authoritatively comments on the value of St. Paul as a witness to the historicity of Jesus:[4]

> Thus Paul's Christ is an *a priori* construction of his own, owing to the historical man of Nazareth and to those who knew that man and cherished his memory little except the bare

[4] Conybeare, *Myth, Magic and Morals,* pp. 6, 9, 12-13.

name of Jesus. Paul's Jesus is an ideal superhuman Saviour, destined, from the beginning of the world, to play an ecumenic rôle. Raised by the spirit of God from the dead, the saviour has left behind in the grave, together with the flesh now given over to corruption, all his Jewish exclusiveness, all his human traits, even his sex. . . .

And it is not merely the outward events and vicissitudes of Jesus's life, as even unsympathetic Jews must have witnessed them, that failed to touch and interest Paul; he is equally silent about the moral and religious teaching of the Master, and shows no acquaintance with the Sermon on the Mount or with the parables. And this is all the stranger because there are several fairly well-authenticated sayings of Jesus which would have stood him in good stead when he was combating the Judaising apostles. . . .

Paul elaborated his gospel in the silence and solitude of Arabia. He declined from the very first moment of his conversion to resort to the brethren of Jerusalem and Galilee, in order to learn from their lips what had been their Master's life and teaching. Thus he writes to the Galatians (1, 11): "For I make known to you, brethren, as touching the gospel which has been preached by me, that it is not after man."

This means that he had no human teacher, nor depended on any humanly transmitted reports of who Jesus was and what he taught. So he continues: "For neither did I receive it from man, nor was I taught it, except by way of revelation on the part of Jesus Christ."

This indicates that Paul got his gospel through visions and private revelations of his own. It had nothing to do with what the companions and apostles of Jesus remembered of their Master's life and conversations. In the immediate sequel he reminds the Galatians of how he had begun life as an observing Jew, and of how he persecuted the Christians: "For ye have heard of my manner of life in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the Church of God, and made havoc of it; and I advanced in the Jews' religion beyond many of mine own age among my countrymen, being more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of my fathers."

And then once more he emphasizes the fact that his teach-

ing had nothing in common, no connection, with the teaching of the historical Jesus as reported by his direct disciples: "But when it was the good pleasure of God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me through his grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I should preach him among the Gentiles; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood; neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were Apostles before me; but I went away into Arabia; and again I returned unto Damascus."

We come next to the four Gospels. The Gospel of John may be eliminated at once as an historical document. No serious scholar contends for a moment that it presents a real historical account of the life and doctrines of Jesus. It is rather an attempt to interpret the person and mission of Jesus in terms of Hellenic metaphysics, particularly the theology of the Alexandrian School. It is highly important in tracing the history of Christian theology but of no significance as historical evidence regarding the life of Jesus. The three Synoptic Gospels, Mark, Matthew and Luke, represent our only actual Christian sources for Jesus' life and teachings. These three gospels were written sometime between 65 and 95 A.D. It is usually assumed that Mark was written sometime between 65 and 70 A.D.; Matthew between 70 and 75 A.D.; and Luke between 78 and 93 A.D. There is a tendency just now among some pietistically-inclined writers to place the date of the Gospels closer to the death of Jesus, but such efforts have not convinced the better scholars. No one of the three Synoptic Gospels was written by an eye-witness of the events recounted in the Gospels. There is a legend to the effect that Mark wrote in part from the reminiscences of St. Peter, but there is no positive proof of this contention. At any rate, the story in Mark is the most direct and straight-forward account we have of the life of Jesus.

The documentary material on the life of Jesus in the Synoptic Gospels is not really as extensive as would seem at first sight. Matthew and Luke are not wholly novel and independent accounts of Jesus' ministry. Both were written later than Mark and embody large portions of the Gospel of Mark. Where they are not based on Mark they make use of a common source, the so-called Oral Gospel or the Non-Marcan Document. This Oral Gospel was apparently handed down by word of mouth until it was made use of by the authors of Matthew and Luke. It has been reconstructed by Professor Adolf Harnack and has been translated and reproduced in Chapter VII of F. C. Conybeare's *Myth, Magic and Morals.* Therefore, Matthew and Luke are not only based on similar material but repeat in considerable part the Gospel According to Mark. The chief difference between Matthew and Luke is to be found in the respective *tendenz* of the authors. Matthew wrote to prove that Jesus was the expected Messiah of the Jews, while Luke's Gospel is conceived in the effort to commend Jesus to the Gentile world after the manner of St. Paul.

There is, therefore, a very slender body of original independent material on the life of Jesus contained in the three Synoptic Gospels. The speeches delivered by the late Mr. Bryan during a single week of the campaign in 1896, together with the newspaper accounts of the delivery of these speeches in a single leading journal, would mount up to a volume far in excess of the material we have on the whole life and ministry of Jesus Christ. The news space given to the wedding and honeymoon of Colonel Lindbergh and Anne Morrow in the New York *Times* alone far exceeded the volume of information we have in regard to the entire career of Jesus. Further, this scanty material deals with only a brief period of his life: chiefly

his birth, a few sporadic episodes of his childhood and the approximately three years of his alleged active ministry. It must be obvious to all that the material on his birth and childhood is for the most part purely legendary, and there is not the slightest evidence that anyone made any notes on his actual preaching or teachings. Even if St. Peter, in a state of senility, dictated a part of the Gospel of Mark to its author, he could at the best have done nothing more than to recall from memory sermons delivered and acts performed some thirty-five or forty years previously. It is most reasonable to suppose that the Gospels represent a composite set of reminiscences about Jesus which were gradually accumulated in the decades preceding the compilation of the Gospels.

That the Gospels reproduce with any literalness or exactness any specific teachings or acts of Jesus is more than can be reasonably expected. General impressions and vague approximations are the best that any reasonable person might hope for. The myths which grow up around even a secular hero in our own day are incredible, as one may discern by reading Mr. Lewis' recent book *Myths After Lincoln*. The possibilities of myth-making concerning a religious hero in the credulous and superstitious period of Jesus are almost boundless. Further, we must remember that we do not have any copies of the Gospels as they were originally compiled. As we pointed out in an earlier chapter, the earliest versions of the New Testament which we possess are two incomplete manuscripts dating from the fourth century. We also indicated in this place that, if we take the whole group of early manuscripts of the New Testament, we get some 200,000 different readings, thus averaging about six different renderings to each verse in the New Testament. This makes it clear how unlikely we are to be able to reproduce

the exact words of Jesus, even granting the wholly impossible hypothesis that they existed in the original manuscripts of the authors of the Synoptic Gospels.

It is clear from the above brief summary of the actual facts in regard to the documentary evidence on the life and ministry of Jesus that there is not in existence a single absolutely authentic passage which we may be sure literally reproduces any saying of Jesus or describes with unerring accuracy any deed or event of his life. It is particularly unfortunate that we do not have any systematic statement of his beliefs on any subject. Had he followed the precedent of Aristotle—assuming that he was capable of so doing—and delivered a series of lectures on history, theology, metaphysics, politics, economics and sociology before a group of students in Jerusalem or elsewhere, we might be able to form some intelligent conception of his actual views on the leading issues of religion and society. Far from this, we have not a single passage which we can be sure accurately reproduces Christ's views on any subject. Even accepting the Synoptic Gospels at their face value, we have only a few and often highly contradictory teachings on any important topics of religion and morality. Both pacifists and militarists are able to quote what seem to be approving passages from Jesus. Tolstoi and Gandhi could derive from Jesus the doctrine of non-resistance, while other followers of the Lamb could derive inspiration for stirring military hymns after the fashion of "The Son of God Goes Forth to War." Again, the Catholic Church has interpreted the teachings of Jesus as favoring asceticism and saintliness above all other types of life. At the same time, a keen modern student of Jesus, the aforementioned Mr. Robert Keable, makes out a good case for his thesis that Jesus was an advocate of free love and that his views on sex much more

closely resemble those of Havelock Ellis than those of St Paul or St. Augustine. These contradictions and uncertainties in the teachings of Jesus have led to the attempt to justify the most contradictory positions on the ground that they were approved by Jesus. In the Catholic Church we have the Christian way of life exemplified by the renunciatory policies and asceticism of a Saint Francis and the frank hedonism of Pope Leo X. Both the Crusaders and the followers of Kirby Page regarded themselves as literal disciples of Jesus. Tolstoi looked upon himself as being just as sincere and devoted a follower of the Prophet of Nazareth as does John D. Rockefeller. In the Episcopal Church alone we find Jesus being imitated by Bishop Manning and Paul Jones. The Methodist Church numbered among its distinguished servants a James Roscoe Day and a Francis J. McConnell, both avowedly devoted followers of the Nazarene.

Sometimes these contradictions and uncertainties in the teachings of Jesus are absolutely vital and crucial. Such for example are his sayings in regard to the nature of the kingdom of God. If Jesus had in mind in this conception an ideal society on earth, then his followers may, with some logic, search his sayings as a guide to social reconstruction, even though his opinions may have little relevance to conditions in the twentieth century. On the other hand, if Jesus was thinking of a spiritual kingdom in the world to come, then his teachings regarding the Kingdom of God have no relevance whatever in regard to the remaking of social conditions here on earth. They would not only be irrelevent, but indeed dangerous and menacing when applied to earthly situations. No informed scholar will pretend that we can be at all certain upon this pivotal point in the teachings of Christ. Approximately the same number of equally eminent scholars can be cited in support of either of these possible but radically different in-

terpretations, though the more sensible view would seem to be that Jesus actually had in mind the eschatological notion of a spiritual kingdom in the world to come. It is therefore apparent that it is utterly absurd to dogmatize upon the actual views of Jesus in regard to any topic whatsoever. He fails to mention in any extant passages many important issues of theology and sociology, and even where his teachings are most copious they are often vague and uncertain and are contradicted by other passages.

We are equally incapable of arriving at any definite picture of the personality and career of Jesus. He may have been one of the most pleasing characters in all history and he may equally well have been one of the most irritating and annoying. It would be equally foolish, on the basis of the evidence which we possess, either to eulogize or denounce Jesus. We simply have to concede Professor Guignebert's contention that a scientific biography of Jesus is completely impossible of execution on account of the paucity of information. Alfred Loisy's picture of him as a true Jew of his times—a village workman, turned prophet, failing in his prophecy and condemned as a proletarian agitator—is probably as close to the truth as we are likely to come.

There is as little factual foundation for the elaborate appreciations of Jesus by the Modernists as there is, for example, for some of the elaborate psychiatric studies of Jesus in which the learned authors have arrived at the verdict that Jesus was insane. Indeed one of the most absurd performances ever executed in connection with the study of the life of Jesus was the work of a man for whom the writer possesses an attitude that approaches reverence, namely, Granville Stanley Hall. His voluminous two volume work on *Jesus the Christ in the Light of*

Modern Psychology could not have been undertaken at all by anyone really familiar with the facts about our knowledge of the life of Jesus. There is not enough authentic and reliable information about the personality of Jesus to make one chapter—or perhaps even a page—in Hall's gigantic epic of the psychologist's imagination. The actual facts in the matter are admirably stated by Mr. Keable in the opening pages of his *Great Galilean:* [5]

> No man knows sufficient of the early life of Jesus to write a biography of him. For that matter, no one knows enough for the normal *Times* obituary notice of a great man. If regard were had to what we should call, in correct speech, definitely historical facts, scarcely three lines could be filled.
>
> Moreover, if newspapers had been in existence, and if that obituary notice had had to be written in the year of his death, no editor could have found in the literature of his day so much as his name. Yet few periods of the ancient world were so well documented as the period of Augustus and Tiberius. But no contemporary writer knew of his existence. Even a generation later, a spurious passage in Josephus, a questionable reference in Suetonius, and the mention of a name that may be his by Tacitus—that is all. His first mention in any surviving document, secular or religious, is twenty years after.
>
> We do not know with anything approaching historical certainty of whom he was born, or when, or where; how long he lived, or how long he labored; and the sayings which are indubitably his are a mere handful. The stories of his reputed resurrection are so contradictory and confused that it is impossible to make more than a guess at their true import. If the question of his ever having lived at all is not very seriously open to doubt, at least it has been possible for a Swedish professor within the last few months to make out a perfectly good case for the supposition that he was born a century or so before the accepted date.

In spite of the slim body of documentary material bearing upon Jesus and his teachings, and conceding the

[5] Keable, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

plausibility of the thesis that he was not actually a historic character, it seems to the writer more consonant with probability to conclude that Jesus was a historic personage, concerning whom we have an unfortunately small body of authentic and dependable information. The conclusion to the question of the historicity of Jesus submitted by Joseph McCabe seems to the writer a sensible version of the whole matter: [6]

> I conclude only that it is more reasonable to believe in the historicity of Jesus. There is no parallel in history to the sudden growth of a myth and its conversion into a human personage in one generation. Moreover, to these early Christians Jesus is not primarily a teacher. A collection of wise teachings might in time get a mythical name attached to it—though why the name "Jesus" it is hard to see—and the myth might in further time become a real person. But from the earliest moment that we catch sight of Christians in history the essence of their belief is that Jesus was an incarnation, in Judea, of the great God of the universe. The supreme emphasis is on the fact that he assumed a human form and shed human blood on a cross. So it seems to me far more reasonable, far more scientific, far more consonant with the facts of religious history which we know, to conclude that Jesus was a man who was gradually turned into a God.

These elementary facts concerning the obscurity surrounding the life of Jesus render it obvious that we cannot hope to possess any such precision in regard to the detailed chronology of his life as is implied in Christmas, Good Friday and Easter, the supposed dates of his birth, death and resurrection. Even conservative scholars, thoroughly convinced of the absolute historicity of Jesus, are forced to admit that we cannot be certain, within the range of a decade at least, as to the year of Jesus' birth, and scarcely less positive regarding his death. Therefore,

[6] J. McCabe, *The Story of Religious Controversy*, p. 228.

the selection of December 25th as the date of his birth is wholly arbitrary. He may equally well have been born on February 22nd, April 1st or July 4th. As a matter of fact, December 25th was originally the holy day of the Mithraic cult, celebrating the returning power of the sun. It was selected by the Christians primarily because it would enable them better to proselyte among the devotees of Mithras. Upon this Mithraic basis were later engrafted the gift-giving customs associated with the Roman Saturnalia and certain mystical and phallic aspects of Norse mythology, thus giving us the Christmas of the orthodox. The roving date of Good Friday and Easter is a confession of the uncertainty of the date of the death and alleged resurrection of Jesus, but there is no more evidence that he was crucified in the spring than that he was put to death in the late autumn. Such matters are of no great doctrinal import, but they are worth mentioning as further qualifications on the orthodox view of certainty and exactitude in regard to the life of Jesus.

III. THE MINISTRY OF JESUS IN MODERN PERSPECTIVE

It will not require a great deal of reflection to convince any open-minded person that the traditional status and position of Jesus as a religious teacher evaporates immediately when we apply to the question the basic tenets of higher criticism. In traditional Christianity Jesus owes his status and prestige primarily, if not exclusively, to the fact that he is represented as the only begotten Son of Yahweh, the Hebrew God of the Old Testament. No self-respecting scholar, even of conservative inclinations, any longer contends for the uniqueness or deity of Yahweh. With the collapse of Yahweh the traditional Jesus likewise crumbles. Further, the logic of his whole ministry

and of his vicarious sacrifice is completely shattered by the modern anthropological and historical attitude toward the nature and evolution of man. The conventional notion of Jesus' ministry is intelligible only in the light of the thesis of the original sin of man, from which Jesus was sent to redeem humanity. As the Fundamentalists put it:

1. We believe that man was created in the image of God, that he sinned, and thereby incurred not only physical death, but also that spiritual death which is separation from God; and that all human beings are born with a sinful nature, and, in the case of those who reach moral responsibility, become sinners in thought, word, and deed.
2. We believe that all who receive by faith the Lord Jesus Christ are born again of the Holy Spirit and thereby become children of God.

No truly literate scholar or thinker today upholds the abominable anachronism of original sin, but with the abandonment of this conception there goes the whole justification for the traditional view of Jesus' mission on earth. If man was not suffering from any blight of original sin, then it is obvious that there was no logic in Christ's sacrifice to save us from this primeval curse of God. In other words, the doctrine of atonement collapses at once when examined in the light of the most elementary findings of anthropology, psychology, sociology, cultural history and biblical scholarship. It does not possess the slightest rationale in the perspective of modern knowledge and secularism. The two great claims for Christ's preëminence have been his divine sonship and the logic of his atoning sacrifice. Both of these buttresses of the Christian Epic have crumbled as a result of the progress of scholarship in the last generation.

Modernists of the devout vintage are given to rationalizing this consideration. They claim that original sin can be conceived of as ignorance and injustice, and they hold that Christ came as a supreme moral teacher to point the way to moral salvation and social reconstruction. We shall proceed now to examine Christ's capacity in this respect.

It is quite apparent that any intelligent discussion of Jesus today must revolve about the issue of his merits as a purely secular religious and moral teacher. Any such issues as those of divine sonship, the virgin birth, and resurrection from the dead need receive no more consideration from serious scholars and thinkers than the legends concerning the Golden Fleece or the return of Barbarossa. They do not in any sense enter into the contemporary perspective. The first point which it is desirable to examine in regard to the qualities of Jesus as a secular religious leader relates to his mastery over the conditions and learning of his own day. No flattering concessions can be made to his claims in this respect. As far as existing evidence enables us to judge, Jesus was not only sadly unacquainted with the culture and events of his own day, but had no keen interest in them. As Randall has well pointed out it is "important to note that Jesus had no interest in utilizing the materials which his own society presented." Further, had he desired to acquaint himself thoroughly with conditions as they existed in the early Roman Empire it would have been very difficult for him to have done so. He lived a very restricted life in a backward economy, in one of the least developed parts of an insignificant dependency within the Roman Empire. As compared with a much-traveled man like Cicero, Jesus' knowledge of antique society was restricted indeed. Further, he was also unquestionably an ignorant man.

There is no proof that he could read or write, and certainly he could not be regarded as an erudite or critically-minded individual. Mr. Keable has summarized the essentials on this point in excellent fashion:[7]

> All these are the speculations of theorists who are driven to them by the necessity of supporting a case. They are fantastic excursions into fairyland. The fact is that the historical Jesus, who steps on the world's stage at the preaching of John the Baptist, was what we should unequivocally call today an ignorant man. Scanty as our knowledge is of him, there is not only no indication to the contrary, but considerable evidence as to the fact. . . .
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> We have a considerable number of instances of the ignorance of Jesus. He seems to have believed that Moses wrote the Pentateuch, that there had been a prophet Jonah who spent three days and nights in a whale's belly, and that the Old Testament story of the Jewish kings and patriarchs was good history. It would, of course, have been extraordinary had he thought otherwise, but the portrait of the traditional Jesus has so obscured the historic figure behind it that it comes to devout persons as a shock to put his ignorance into plain language. Thus Jesus no doubt had no idea as to the existence of the New World, the most crude knowledge as to the properties and functions of the human body, and an ignorance of the heavens and the earth which would seem abysmal to a modern schoolboy.
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> Jesus had no special knowledge of God. He dredged his knowledge of him out of the depths of a peculiarly sincere, pellucid, and loving heart, but it was a human heart at best. His knowledge of God was obtained in the same way that a thousand mystics in all ages and of all races have obtained their knowledge of him.

Some may be surprised to have us emphasize the point that Jesus was by no means completely in rapport with the knowledge of his own day, but it goes without saying that he could not possibly have known anything of our

[7] Keable, *op. cit.*, pp. 47-49, 53.

present-day culture and its problems. Nor did he in any sense anticipate them. His mind functioned only in connection with certain legends of Jewish history with which he had become acquainted and with the experiences of his daily life which were confined very largely to the activities of a rudimentary culture. To hold that Jesus in any way foresaw the coming of our modern machine age, the rise of the factory system and the problems of urban civilization is as preposterous as to hold that he anticipated the astro-physical theories of Shapley. His mind, like that of all other human beings, was circumscribed by his knowledge and experience. Dr. Randall has admirably summarized Jesus' complete ignorance of the issues of contemporary society, for the solution of which many contemporary Christian socialists regard the teachings of Jesus as entirely adequate:[8]

> Most of the materials out of which our society must create a good life were unknown to Jesus. We are already living by scientific thought; we must bring much more of it into our lives. The scientific method and spirit are part of the intellectual faith of all intelligent men. Our society has tapped reservoirs of physical power, and turned it to the multiplication of material goods. Our culture is wealthy in its artistic traditions; it is devoted to literature, the drama, painting, and music. But there was no science for Jesus, nor had the notion of natural law, or the search for knowledge, even begun to enter the spirit of his age. For him neither the form, the spirit, nor the fruits of scientific inquiry existed. Similarly, he had no interest in the artistic pursuits of a complicated society. Above all, he had no inkling of the power over nature that technology was to bring, or the variety of instruments for living that it would create. These are the conditions of our life; somehow we must fit them into an ordered and satisfying harmony. Jesus could of necessity see neither these building stones, nor the very problems their wise utilization presents.

[8] Randall, *Religion in the Modern World*, pp. 216-217.

In a notable article in *Harper's Magazine* for April, 1929, Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick presents a very interesting discussion of the real nature of Christianity. In the earlier section of this article he disposes in remarkably frank and candid fashion of most of the conventional arguments for the uniqueness of Jesus and the Christian religion. He points out: (1) that other religious groups make the same claim for the inspired nature of their religious books as the Christians make for the Bible; (2) that other religions possess the same belief in the performance of miraculous acts by their religious leaders that the Christians associate with Christ and the Apostles; (3) that many other great religious leaders have been assigned a virgin birth and have been deified after their death; (4) that other great world religions believe fervently in the second coming of the founders or leaders of their faith; (5) that the Christian beliefs and practices associated with penance, atonement and regeneration are frequently found in other great religions; (6) that even those supposedly unique doctrines of Jesus in regard to brotherly love, kindliness and sympathy can be duplicated in the sayings of other and non-Christian religious leaders; and, finally, (7) that these resemblances between Christianity and the other great world religions cannot in any way be explained on the hypothesis that they have been borrowed from the Christians. Dr. Fosdick concludes that the unique quality in the teachings of Jesus and the special genius of Christianity is to be discovered in the reverence for personality. He says: "Were one to select the special contribution which Jesus of Nazareth Himself has made and is making to man's thought, one could do no better than to call him the champion of personality. . . . Whether one really is a Christian or not depends on

whether one accepts or rejects Jesus' attitude toward personality."

The writer regrets that he cannot accept Dr. Fosdick's positive statements with the same assurance that he can his admirable critical observations. It does not seem to the writer that Jesus can any more be regarded as the unique champion of personality than he can be viewed as a factory reformer, an advocate of social insurance or a single-taxer. In the first place, one can discover in the teachings assigned to Jesus passages which are destructive of any dynamic conception of personality and would lead to self-effacement if not to self-destruction. It is only through selecting out favorable passages that one can make out a good case for Jesus as an exponent of personality. Even more important is the fact that in the writings of Plato and other Greek philosophers one can discover much more profound, consistent and constructive suggestions regarding the human personality and its development than can be found in the teachings of Jesus or elsewhere in the Bible. Likewise, the modern psychologists, sociologists and philosophers have surpassed Plato in the profoundity and accuracy of their study of personality to a degree equal to Plato's superiority over Jesus. Further, Dr. Fosdick has enjoyed infinitely greater opportunities than Jesus in the way of the study and analysis of the human personality. Therefore, Mr. Fosdick is himself incomparably better equipped to defend and elucidate the principle of personality than Christ and all His Apostles combined. Further, Dr. Fosdick is well aware of the existence and nature of modern psychology and psychiatry, and knows of the researches carried on in these branches of knowledge relative to a truly scientific conception of the human personality. Moreover, he has a remarkable knowledge and appreciation of the best

contributions to æsthetics, which are so essential in supplementing the strictly scientific notion of human personality and in producing a well-rounded reaction to the individual and his social setting. If, for a more adequate discussion of the problems of personality, Dr. Fosdick feels the need of reliance upon information other than that which he himself possesses, he should certainly admit that these modern authorities can furnish him with infinitely more voluminous and reliable information on the subject than can Jesus of Nazareth. Indeed, to compare Jesus with Havelock Ellis as a protagonist and analyst of personality would be as preposterous as to compare him with Michaelson as a physicst. We regard Dr. Fosdick's primary interest in utilizing religion as a technique for personality development as one of the most promising manifestations of religious reconstruction today. We merely suggest that he abandon the Jesus stereotype and approach the issue in the same common-sense and modernized fashion that he would any other problem which has not been contaminated in his mind with the Jesus stereotype.

In short, it seems that today the maximum tribute which can be rendered to Jesus by a thoroughly informed person must be one akin to the suggestion set forth by Heywood Broun in the New York *Telegram* for February 11, 1929. He here proposes a new national holiday, to be known as "Be Kind Day." He expresses his belief that this would be the most fitting tribute of mankind to the life and teachings of Jesus. His point is that the only permanent and enduring contribution of Jesus was his emphasis upon kindliness, sympathy and justice. Of course, the critical observer will remark that we cannot be certain from the New Testament that Jesus was an unqualified believer in these virtues generally associated with the con-

cept of philanthropic love. There are not a few passages ascribed to him which radiate bitterness, bellicosity and vengeance. Further, it is obvious to anyone who has read at all in the literature of the history of philosophy and the history of religion that Christ's possible emphasis upon kindliness, sympathy and brotherly love was in no sense original with him. It was a doctrine which had been set forth frequently in the literature of the Orient and Greece for at least two thousand years prior to the Christian Era.

Though an attitude of kindliness, sympathy and justice may be the most important element in any religious and ethical system which is to be applied to human material, we have to face many difficult and complicated problems in our twentieth century civilization which the mere spirit of kindliness can scarcely solve. It is for this reason that one should prefer to take his ethical guidance from men like John Dewey, Havelock Ellis, Bertrand Russell, H. M. Parshley, Durant Drake, Will Durant, Thorstein Veblen and others than from Jesus. Kindliness will not enable us to choose intelligently between the views of the capitalistic system held by Judge Gary and Ivy Lee on the one hand, and by W. Z. Foster and Scott Nearing, on the other. Kindliness will hardly suffice to tell us how much good or how much damage may be done to an adolescent American by Mary Ware Dennett's brochure on sex education or how likely an American college girl is to be ruined through a perusal of Radclyffe Hall's *Well of Loneliness*. Sympathy alone will afford little clue as to whether Reno is an asset to modern American society. Sweet amiability will not enable us to judge as to whether Andrew Volstead's definition of intoxicating liquors was a sound one; nor will it enable us to estimate the validity of the pronouncements of the Board of Temperance, Prohibition

and Public Morals of the Methodist Church on the morally destructive nature of the modern dance and drink habits. Nor will a spirit of sweet understanding suggest adequate ways of handling the problem of traffic in New York City. Finally, if morality is to be a thing not only of scientific accuracy but of beauty as well, we shall need the services of the competent æsthete as well as those of the apostle of kindliness. No sensible person will deny that all types of efforts to work out a sound body of morals will be greatly aided and improved if permeated by an urbane and sympathetic spirit, but this in itself is hardly enough for us unless we are willing to retire to a mode of life as simple as that of Christ or Gandhi.

In short, we believe that Mr. Broun's suggestion of a "Be Kind Day" to commemorate Christ's life here on earth, is not only highly appropriate but actually represents just about the maximum consideration which should be accorded to Christ in the religion of the future. Whether correctly or not, we may at least concede that the inculcation of the principles of love, kindliness and sympathy represent the core of Christ's teachings. Further, though others before and since his time have dealt much more thoroughly and profoundly with these subjects, nevertheless, Christ may well serve as the best historic symbol of the doctrine of love and kindliness. Such a landmark to his memory as Mr. Broun suggests, then, appears to the writer the most perfect conceivable solution of the Christ issue in the light of modern culture.

The average person, and particularly the orthodox Christian, identifies the doctrines of Jesus with the principles and practices of the Christian religion. That this cannot be done with historic accuracy or logical consistency has been understood for centuries. The English Deists of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries dis-

tinguished sharply between historical Christianity and the teachings of Jesus. They rejected the former and accepted the latter. Further progress in the study of the history of religions and the intellectual history of Europe has enabled us today to confirm this deistic view on the basis of a much larger fund of historical information. We now recognize that even though Jesus had been virtually and literally the Christ and the Only Begotten Son of God, this fact would not confer any particular prestige or validity upon Christianity as it has actually been practiced. Christianity, as we have shown, was not a faith "once and for all delivered to the saints" by Jesus, but one of the most syncretistic or composite of religions. It derived its basic practices, including many of the sacraments, from the religious beliefs and rites of primitive man; its cosmogony and historical philosophy from the Jews; its Messianic background from the Egyptians and Jews; its theology from the Greeks; its cosmic philosophy, eschatology, and other-worldliness from the Persians; its impurity-complex from the ascetic strains in Judaism, the oriental mystery cults, and Neoplatonism; its reliance upon faith and credulity as against reason and observation from Neoplatonism; its ritual and liturgy—even the sacrament of the mass—from the pagan mystery cults; its methods of preaching from the pagan rhetoricians; and its organization, law, and financial system from the Roman Empire. By the time of St. Augustine what passed for Christianity would have been as novel and perplexing to Jesus as it would have been to Zoroaster, Confucius or Buddha. Protestants cannot escape from the deadly logic of these historical facts by contending that Luther, Calvin, Knox, Zwingli, and Wesley were more Christlike in their intellectual perspective and moral ideals than Jerome, Augustine, or Aquinas.

All this means, of course, that Christians can in no sense legitimately ascribe the triumph of Christianity to the deity of Christ or to the unique virtues of Christianity. What survived and became dominant in religious belief and practice was not Christ's teachings but historic Christianity—an entirely different thing. Indeed, the victory of the synthetic historical Christianity might be used as an argument against Christ's deity and uniqueness. If he had been the Son of God, neither He nor the Father would have allowed Christ's doctrine to be perverted and later almost wholly supplanted by a compound of Judaism and paganism.

What might have happened to western society if the teachings of Jesus had been literally applied, we cannot well know with any precision. There seems little doubt, however, that the total results of Christianity to date have been a decisive liability to the human race. There is no doubt whatever that Christianity has actually produced more suffering, misery, bloodshed, intolerance and bigotry than it has ever assuaged or supressed. Those who are at all sceptical in regard to the truth of this statement may well peruse the brilliant recent book of Mr. Kirby Page, *Jesus or Christianity?* This work is devoted to the special theme of the actual effects of historical Christianity upon civilization. The author is a Christian clergyman of great repute, and one of the most ardent living eulogists of Jesus. The book is, then, not the product of a professional free-thinker or a Christian-baiter, but of the learning and ingenuity of one of the most estimable Christian gentlemen now living.

Many will counter this allegation that Christianity has been a liability to society and civilization by the assertion that if it had not prevailed in western society things might have been much worse than they have been.

Historians recognize, of course, that if Christianity had not triumphed the dominating religion of western civilization would have been Mithraism, which almost defeated Christianity in the great competition of mystery cults in the later Roman Empire. It is quite possible that this Persian cult would have had more disastrous social effects than Christianity, though there is much evidence to the contrary. The two Persian sects that hung over into the Middle Ages, the Cathari and the Albigenses, were certainly more favorable to civilization and decency than the medieval Catholic Christians. Yet, even granting that Mithraism would have been more disastrous than Christianity, it nevertheless remains true that it is no vindication of one religion to prove that another might be worse.

One of the most time-worn arguments for the validity of Christianity is the assertion that it triumphed over its competitors and has persisted to our own day. It is held by many apologists for Christianity that such could not have been the case had Christianity not been divinely revealed and approved. This argument can be quickly undermined by calling attention to the example of Mohammedanism. If the test of the validity of a religion is to be its growth, spread and proselyting capacity, then Mohammedanism can make a more impressive appeal than Christianity. Christianity had the advantage of being launched about six and one-half centuries before Mohammedanism. Yet today the Mohammedans far outnumber the Christians, and the Mohammedans have, moreover, reconquered the very areas in which Christianity arose and established its first notable strongholds.

A very common method of attempting to vindicate Christianity is to be found in the allegation of its unique contributions to civilization and social reform. It is contended, in particular, that it enormously elevated woman

and the position accorded to her in society; that it was responsible for the abolition of human slavery; and that it was the chief factor in bringing about democracy in human relationships. None of these contentions can stand up under the scrutiny of the historian. The official Christian attitude toward woman and sex was one of the most degrading conceptions which has ever prevailed in this field. So evil was woman and her temptation to sexual indulgence regarded that St. Augustine even revised the doctrine of original sin. He held that the original sin was sexual intercourse and that Eve had been responsible for it. The Church placed a great premium upon virginity, but it honored normal womanhood and sex far less than did the orientals and the pagans. It was believed necessary to clear Christ up from the stigma of sex for two generations. Hence, the Catholics not only invented the fiction of the Virgin Birth but also enunciated the dogma of the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mother of Christ. In his *Short History of Woman* John Langdon-Davies has for all time put the quietus upon the perennial Christian pretension to having elevated woman and her function in society. The question of the effect of organized Christianity upon human slavery has been made the subject of special examination by Kirby Page in his *Jesus or Christianity?* His final conclusion is that: "There can be no doubt that slavery would have disappeared centuries before it did had it not been buttressed by the support of the Churches." The well-informed historian is compelled to agree with this estimate with respect to both white and negro slavery.

Nor can it be held that Christianity made any notable contributions to democracy. The equality of man which Christianity envisaged was not a secular equality. Christianity has ever been a bulwark of the doctrine of a di-

vinely approved social hierarchy. The Christians were willing to concede some equality among the saved in heaven, but they have never worked as a unit for earthly equality. The Church in the Middle Ages became an integral part of the feudal order and no more arrogant and oppressive nobles existed in the medieval age than the great feudal bishops and abbots. Luther fiercely opposed the democratic movements in his own day. The early Protestant divines were the most docile servants of the kings and were the mouthpiece for the doctrine of passive obedience. When they espoused revolution, as they did in the age of Cromwell, they fought for the middle class and not for the underman. Democracy was primarily the result of the agitation of the working-classes after the Industrial Revolution, and Mr. Page and others have made it clear that, in the struggles between the employers and the employed since 1750, the force of organized Christianity has been thrown overwhelmingly on the side of the employers and of industrial feudalism. About the only direct contribution of Christianity to democracy was executed in the United States in the form of the democratic doctrines of the frontier preachers, but their services in promoting the realization of the democratic ideal in the modern world as a whole were slight indeed.

There is a notable movement among Modernist Christians, particularly Christian Socialists, in favor of reviving the teachings of Jesus as contrasted with the doctrines and practices of historic Christianity. Such persons are in favor of a reconstruction of religion, and contend that the teachings of Jesus will constitute an admirable foundation for both the religion and the social ethics of the future. The writer regrets that he must point out what appear to him quite insuperable objections to any such proposal. In the first place, it would be quite

impossible to recover the actual doctrines of Jesus on either religion or social ethics. If he really was an active religious teacher for some three years or more it is quite apparent that the few sayings attributed to him which we actually possess are far too scanty, fragmentary and contradictory to furnish the basis for any fair and decent appraisal of Jesus' actual theology and social philosophy. Yet, the material which we have available in the Synoptic Gospels is all that we can ever hope to possess relative to the life and teachings of Jesus. Therefore, even if it were desirable to make the doctrines of Jesus the basis of contemporary religion and ethics, it would be impossible for us to do so. Even more cogent is the fact that, though we could recover the systematic teachings of Jesus, it would be sheer folly to propose their utilization as a guide to the religion and ethics of the present generation. What we need is the pooling of the best available intellectual resources of our day and not a reverent, antiquarian search for the dicta of a relatively uniformed figure in the obscure past.

Again, once we make a candid examination of the actual teachings of Jesus, in so far as we know of them, it must be admitted that they are not only archaic, but even destructive of any advanced civilization. If the teachings of Jesus as they exist were to be applied to contemporary society, nothing less than anarchy and the destruction of the civilized order would inevitably follow. American conservatives are extremely fearful of the socio-economic doctrines of Soviet Russia, but the teachings of Jesus would be quite as destructive of the present order as the economic theory of the Bolsheviks. Moreover, the form of destructiveness inherent in Jesus' doctrines is not of the sort which, as in Russia, could be made the point of departure for a constructive experiment with a new type

of industrial society. Most of Jesus' specific teachings on the social and economic order would produce only sheer and mischievous destruction. Further, their contradictions would form the logical basis for innumerable civil wars. It is highly amusing and equally instructive to contemplate the spectacle of American billionaires shivering in dread before the challenge of Communist Russia and at the same time giving millions for the construction of churches and university chapels in order that the teachings of Jesus may be set forth with clarity and completeness. It is quite obvious either that they have only a very slight knowledge of the real teachings of Jesus or else they feel relatively certain that the custodians of these pulpits will properly obscure the sentiments of Jesus. Dr. Randall presents us with an admirable statement of both the inadequacy of Jesus' teachings in coping with modern issues and of the destructive nature of their import when applied to modern civilization:[9]

> The moral precepts of Jesus show little concern with what have become the necessary conditions of human existence today. The disinterested investigations of the scientist, the thinking of the philosopher, the art of the painter, the sculptor, the writer, the dramatist, the poet, the musician, the practice of one's vocation, the perpetuation and education of the race through family life, the devotion of marriage, political and economic reorganization, industrial democracy, popular education, the readjustment of woman's life, international coöperation,—to all these vital concerns of today the words and practices of Jesus are either irrelevant, or profoundly out of harmony with the convictions of modern men. There is not one of these forms of our life in which Jesus can be imitated, or his words obeyed literally, without the downfall of the whole structure of modern civilization.

[9] Randall, *Religion in the Modern World*, p. 219.

Our suggestion to the stalwart and progressive Modernists is that they speak on their own authority and cease the effort to justify courageous and progressive proposals by means of a devious and unconvincing attempt to identify them with some chance remark attributed to Jesus. If the Modernists are frank enough to indulge in candid self-examination they will actually find that the views which they attribute to Jesus are actually their own convictions which they have derived from a lifetime of experience and study. In the present generation they can build up more respect for such views through candidly admitting that they are their own than they can hope to create for them through attributing them to Jesus. The writer has enjoyed much more extensive contact with the intelligensia of the younger generation than can be claimed by any Modernist preacher. Today, with the educated and thoughtful youth of the land, the attribution of a doctrine to Jesus does not in itself insure respect or receptivity with regard to the proposition in question. What the modern generation desires is to be convinced of a declaration upon the basis of its inherent merits. To ask them to accept a doctrine merely because it was enunciated by Jesus actually interposes a quite unnecessary objection to the proposition. They are suspicious of the validity of teachings so much out of harmony with, and adjustment to, the modern age.[10] Many who would be ardent and enthusiastic supporters of men like Sherwood Eddy and Harry Ward, if these men candidly set forth their doctrines in their own behalf, are inclined to turn away distrustful and unconvinced when told that they should espouse these propositions because they represent "Jesus' way of life" or "the ethic of Jesus."

It would appear, therefore, that any well-informed

[10] Cf. Dieffenbach, *Religious Liberty,* pp. 19, 199-203.

Modernist can speak upon any relevant contemporary subject with far more authority than Jesus. For a Modernist to invoke Yahweh in his sermons and to base his preaching upon the Synoptic Gospels is as absurd as it would be if a physician in the year 1929 prescribed insulin for diabetes only after offering an earnest incantation to Aesculapius and then reading at length from Hippocrates or Galen. The Modernist cannot logically taunt Mr. Bryan or Dr. Straton for their views on Yahweh and then himself cling to the conventional view that Jesus was unique as a religious and moral teacher. Yahweh and Jesus are a theological couplet and a cultural complex that stand or fall together.

Some critics may contend that the author has not been consistent with his thesis that we know so little about Jesus that we cannot formulate any definite conception of his personality or teachings. They may hold that if we do not have information enough to justify the common-sense Jesus of Keable, the Wall Street Christ of Bruce Barton, or the revolutionary Christ of Sherwood Eddy, we do not have proof of the uninformed and unsophisticated Jesus that the writer portrays. We have made no effort to draw up any conclusive view of Jesus, maintaining that any such achievement is wholly impossible. We simply contend that all available evidence indicates that Jesus was an ignorant man. We are willing to concede, however, that the evidence may be too slight even to support this thesis. But the implications of such a concession can bring slight comfort to devout followers of Jesus.

We may well conclude this chapter on Jesus by the following reasonable citation from Hermon F. Bell's *Introduction to Theology*, even though we need not accept Mr. Bell's theistic interpretation of the origins of wisdom and ethics:[11]

[11] Bell, *op. cit.*, pp. 89 ff.

Modern theology is at fault in that it does not follow the logic of its own teachings. Either the conservatives are right and the new theology is wrong in its teaching as to the Bible and Jesus; or, if the new theology is right in the results of its scholarship, it is open to criticism for still giving the Bible and Jesus the place it does. Modern Christianity has brought the Bible back from its infallible position and given it a place with the world's literature, but it continues to hold it apart from other books. It has taken the distinctively infinite attributes from Jesus, it confesses his limitations, yet it worships him and makes him authoritative;—and why? Because of his alleged sinlessness. But this sinlessness cannot be proven.

We can no more speak of the sinlessness of Jesus than of the artistic perfection of Michael Angelo or Raphael. And every one knows that, however great Angelo was as an artist, he was not perfect. He lacked some qualities that Raphael had, and vice versa. So Jesus lacked some qualities that Paul had. To say that by sinlessness, we mean that Jesus did no wrong,—this is at best a merely negative statement. To say that he did everything that was right and that ought to be done, to say that he combined in perfect degree all good qualities,—this no man is able to assert. If the assertion is made, it is no more valid than the old proof for the infallibility of the Bible, namely this,—that when we read it we know that it finds us, and we are inwardly convinced of the truth of what we read, hence every word, every part of the Bible, is without error. It is a similar proof that is offered for the sinlessness of Jesus,—because this or that or all of these incidents reveal his greatness and his goodness, the conclusion is drawn that he was always without fault of any kind. If, however, any one prefers to appeal, as is often done, to the supposition that Jesus, by word or by implication, claimed to be perfect, let such a one remember that a similar proof for the infallibility of the Bible has proven inadequate. Unless Jesus perfectly and completely reveals all of God that we know, why make him the one leader, the one teacher, the one example? No man, not even Jesus, is great enough, or wise enough, or good enough, to be the sole authority in morals and religion.

Modern theology fails to meet the universal need not simply by reason of what it teaches, but far more by reason of what it neglects to say. It is at fault in confining itself to the Bible

not so much because the Bible is not helpful as because there are other messages from God. To take one illustration, God spoke to the ancient Greeks in a way that He did not speak to the Hebrews or to any one else; and the Christian Church by taking no account of this message is neglecting the Word of God. To be sure, the Christian Church does not forbid men to study or to read these words spoken to other peoples than the Hebrews, but it does not, as a religion ought to do, stop men in the busy rush of life and say,—hold, here is a word of God to you. It does not in church or church school tell of that real Word of God, which comprises all the great truths which courageous souls have seized upon down through the entire stream of human life. And God has sent us prophets even in recent years. There are Victor Hugo, and Goethe, and Browning and Tennyson, and Carlyle with his message that might is divine because the only power that can accomplish lasting results is power that is righteous; and there is Emerson to teach us that self-reliance which is trust in the Spirit within and above us. And there is Abraham Lincoln. As many lessons are to be gained by study of his life as that of David, who was taken from tending his father's sheep and made ruler over Israel. It is not enough once a year to suspend, as it were, religious exercises and preach a patriotic sermon on Washington or Lincoln, or of an evening discuss the poetry of Browning or Tennyson. There is need of clear and emphatic witness to the great fact that the all-comprehending God has given us the enduring literature of all nations as part of His Divine Word. And this Word asks not toleration, but demands its rightful place as the Book of the Church.

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Chapter IX.

RELIGION IN A SECULAR AGE

Today a great Spirit is passing over the earth which says, "I take my stand upon the present and mean to dominate it; and if I destroy the past, it is for the sake of the future."

(Elwood Worcester)

I. THE CASE FOR RELIGION IN THE MODERN WORLD

MANY scientists would hold that in the future there will be no need for religion and that science will be able to supply all the insight and controls essential to human well-being. This may well be true, but the writer is inclined to concede that a secularized social religion like Unitarian Humanism or advanced Christian Socialism may be of great value in the future in organizing group sentiment in support of decent and just causes. It is probable that man's emotions, as well as his intellect, must be exploited in the service of social control, and religion is better adapted to performing this function than science. The main thing to emphasize is that the new secular religion will not of itself attempt to supply the information and guidance essential to the most perfect realization of human happiness, but will derive this knowledge from the best science and æsthetics of the age. In inculcating the desirable attitude toward alcohol, for example, the new religion would consult Raymond Pearl, Starling and other scientific students of the effect of alcohol on man. In dealing with sex it would follow Forel, Havelock Ellis, Freud

and Robinson. Books like Parshley's *Science and Good Behavior* and Edman's *The World, the Arts and the Artist,* would be regarded as at least harbingers of the Old and New Testaments of the new religion. Durant Drake would be accorded more respect than St. Augustine. We would rid ourselves of the perennial emphasis of the religionist on the antithesis between intelligence and character.

Inasmuch as there is little or nothing in common between the old supernaturalism and the new secular religion, it has been proposed that we drop the term "religion" as applied to the latter and denominate it social ethics, humanitarianism or something of the sort—Comte called it "Positivism." There is much to be said for such a suggestion, but to retain the term religion may have certain pragmatic value in forwarding the transition from the old to the new régime.

No sensible person would contend that natural and social science, coöperating with a secular religion, will be able to end all human ills and terminate all human unhappiness. There is much unhappiness inherent in the very nature of man and his social relations. Yet, we can at least say that in the new secular régime we shall cease to suffer from fear of imaginary dangers and evils. We shall no longer be incapable of making the best possible use of all available secular agencies in ridding ourselves of actual menaces to health and happiness. The sources of misery and suffering which remain will ultimately be only those of the insoluble or ineradicable type.

II. WHAT RELIGION MUST ABANDON TO COMMAND RESPECT AND CONFIDENCE TODAY

If we cannot be too dogmatic or confident in regard to what forms religion may take in the future, we can at least

be fairly positive about those things which any successful and reasonable religion in the future must abandon in order to command the respect and enlist the interests of those who actually live, intellectually speaking, in the twentieth century. If Modernism is to save religion, it must surrender such of its present tenets as do not square with those scientific discoveries and scholarly researches which are not open to challenge. If it compromises and wavers, it is bound to lose its most intelligent and indispensable supporters; for those who might constitute the core of its forces will be driven out of the churches to seek intellectual freedom and consistency elsewhere. It profits Modernism nothing to abandon one sinking craft to take refuge on another that is just as certainly foundering. Religion must abandon its hopeless effort to adapt ancient categories and concepts to new knowledge of entirely different nature and connotation. Rather, it must base its reconstruction upon the facts of the cosmos, of the world, and of man as we now know them, and then determine what valid religious concepts and practices can be worked out in harmony with the new knowledge and perspective. Never has there been a more pertinent example of the futility of attempting to force new wine into old bottles than we find in conservative Modernistic apologetic.

In the course of this book we have indicated the nature and extent of the untenable beliefs and attitudes supported by the Fundamentalists and the Devout Modernists. Therefore, it will not be necessary to repeat and reiterate at length on this subject. We may content ourselves with a bare enumeration of those older dogmas and interests which must most certainly be surrendered before we can begin any intelligent consideration of the possibility of formulating a religion which will be compatible with modern knowledge and truly serviceable to contemporary society. These intellectual and cultural anachronisms,

which have played a basic part in the older religion and religious philosophies but must now be abandoned, may be summarized as: (1) insistence upon dogmatic certainty of the existence of God; (2) any primary interest in the question of God; (3) the doctrine of the divinity, infallibility or unique religious significance of Jesus; (4) absorption with considerations of the Infinite and The Absolute; (5) support of transcendental and idealistic philosophy, which attempts to establish truths and values independent of time and space, as well as of human factors and situations; (6) all assumptions of a supernatural world, alien to man's natural conditions and inscrutable by the methods of science and secular knowledge; (7) the personality obsession, particularly as relates to the effort to personify the cosmos and God, though we may concede the supreme importance of a secular consideration of the human personality and its development; and, finally, (8) the outstanding theological fossils, such as the conceptions of the soul, immortality, sin, the spirit world, prayer, and the sense of sanctity and the sacred.

Some of these suggestions as to what must be surrendered in the light of modern knowledge raise issues of sufficient importance to justify brief discussion. A basic question arises as to whether a belief in God is actually necessary to man or a vital religion. The belief in God has been regarded as indispensable in the past: (1) because God was believed to be essential to protect us from supernatural powers and dangers; (2) because His Grace alone was able to save us from Hell; and (3) because of the sense of dependence upon the Heavenly Father. None of these three reasons will appear to the scientist to be longer valid. Even the continued belief in God as the basis of security and protection has been shown by the psychologists to be the result of our unfortunate projection of parental imagery and symbolism into our interpretation of

the cosmos. More and more, people are being able to go along quite securely and serenely without any sense of divine support.

People who feel dependent upon God do so because they have been taught to seek security in His protection. It is, to use Watson's terminology, not an inherent necessity but rather a "conditioned response." There is little or no doubt that man can successfully deal with the impending necessity of facing experience and reality without any conviction that he possesses a cosmic guide or companion. The more rapidly he effects this emancipation the more immediately and more certainly will he be able to cope with his mundane problems in a sane, direct and rational fashion.

The chief objection to any vivid interest in or thoroughgoing acceptance of the conception of God is to be found in its contribution to intellectual confusion in dealing with fundamental religious and moral issues. In other words, whereas Descartes assumed that we could not produce any clear and logical thinking without the initial premise of the existence of God, we have now come to see that we can actually have no real intellectual lucidity and logical consistency in treating basic questions of morals and religion as long as we insist upon retaining any vivid interest in the God concept. The intellectual confusion produced by the theistic attitude arises primarily out of the introduction of an absolutely indeterminate element in dealing with the question of the good life. For example, some of the Reconcilers, among them Professor Mather, hold that the chief aim of religion is to promote interest in and loyalty to the cause of the good life. But they go on to specify that the good life which they envisage is not the best possible life from the standpoint of man's interests

and activities here on earth, but that life which is "most pleasing to the Administrator of the Cosmos."

Once any such contention as this is admitted we face absolute chaos and confusion in working out practical suggestions as to the nature and achievement of the good life. As long as we view the question from the standpoint of the nature of man and his social needs, we can approach the problem of the best life for man with some degree of precision and logic. We know a great deal about human nature and social institutions at the present time, and we are well on our way towards discovering much more in this field than we know at the present time. In other words, we are making rapid progress towards real ability to work out a valid and consistent philosophy of human life in strictly secular terms. Once we bring into the picture, however, the notion of attempting to please the Administrator of the Cosmos, we are thrown into interminable chaos, and the whole search for the good life is confused if not, indeed, paralyzed. No person can say with assurance that there is any Administrator of the Cosmos, and even if we are willing to concede that there is such a Being or force, there is no method whereby we can ascertain His identity or wishes. Therefore, to set up any such goal as winning the approval of the Administrator of the Cosmos is to destroy at once any prospect of working out a rational and satisfactory conception of life. Still further, if one is interested in pleasing the Administrator of the Cosmos, it would seem logical to hold that we are most likely to do so if we attempt to secure the most perfect realization and expression of our inherent capacities. Those who believe in an Administrator of the Cosmos must admit, if they are consistent, that the traits of man are those with which God has endowed him. Therefore, the surest way of pleasing the Administrator of the Cosmos

would seem to lie in the best possible use of the equipment which He has conferred upon mankind. Indeed, it would appear that there is no other possible manner whereby one might hope to win the approval of the cosmic God if there be one.

Especially vicious and deplorable, in the light of modern psychology, is the tendency of most Modernists to retain the conception of God as the "Father" of man and the human race and to envisage him in terms of parental symbolism and imagery. Children have trouble enough in adjusting themselves to the situation of earthly parenthood. To encumber them with still greater burdens in the shape of the even more ominous and difficult symbolism of celestial parenthood is poor pedagogy and psychology and has wrecked many a personality. Further, it tends to keep one's reactions in the field of religion on an essentially infantile level. If our stereotypes, imagery and symbolism are infantile, our thinking in such fields must likewise remain fundamentally childlike. Again, this type of symbolization of God creates unusual difficulties and psychic lesions when the disillusionment comes, as it is likely to in the case of every educated person today. When the untenable dogmas and infantilisms of orthodoxy are undermined in school or college or by reading, the person who has been accustomed to react to God and religion in terms of the parental symbolism suffers keenly from a psychic malady akin to homesickness. The psychological distress involved in the reconstruction of religious beliefs is greatly and quite unnecessarily increased thereby. In this connection it is interesting to remember that ninety-eight per cent. of both the ministers and the theological students investigated by Dr. Betts felt that God could best be envisaged in terms of a sublimated earthly parent and could be quite literally regarded as a "Father."

In the *Forum* for August, 1929, Max Eastman brings forward against the belief in God what may be called the argument of psychic or amatory economy. He says:

> I would define religion as a belief that there is Something in the objective world, aside from other people, to which you can direct your emotions of love and adoration, and that you will be helped by loving this Something. If this definition is acceptable, I am prepared to defend the proposition that religion is a hindrance to progress. The idea that we are all children of God and that we must love God with all our strength uses up just that much love which we might turn to the loving of our neighbor.

If the loss of a belief in a dogmatic certainty of the nature and existence of God is no great menace, what about the possible danger of the uprooting of supernatural religion? History shows that the great objection in every age to the progress of enlightenment has been the gloomy prediction that social chaos would ensue. At the end of the sixteenth century one of the most learned of Frenchmen, John Bodin, felt that society would collapse if we surrendered the belief in witchcraft. Yet witches have passed and humanity goes on unshaken from the loss. Controls based on scientific knowledge and conviction are being created to supplant those grounded on fear of the unknown. We no longer need a papal encyclical to induce an individual to avoid contagious diseases and poisonous herbs. There is no reason to believe that social control based upon scientific knowledge cannot be made to pervade every aspect of human behavior. A secular religion may well reinforce guidance of this sort. Indeed, the real danger is that the new secular guidance will not be supplied rapidly enough to supplant the fading supernaturalism. The latter is passing for reasons quite apart from the sporadic attacks of courageous individual scientists; chief-

ly, the incidence of contemporary secular and mechanical civilization. We must either prepare for an age guided by science and æsthetics or be willing to contemplate an era without any positive guidance and social control, which would be chaos indeed.

Man can only survive on condition that he is able to extend the range of science throughout every department of knowledge and make science pervade every level of society. How far a new type of religion can aid in this process time alone will tell. Meanwhile every sane scientist will welcome the collaboration of every religious expert of enlightened outlook and humanitarian sentiments. The desirable goal of both has been well expressed by Max Otto:[1]

> Accept the stern condition of being physically alone in all the reach of space and time, that we may then, with new zest, enter the warm valley of earthly existence—warm with human impulse, aspiration and affection, warm with the inconquerable thing called life; turn from the recognition of our cosmic isolation to a new sense of human togetherness, and so discover in a growing human solidarity, in a progressively ennobled humanity, in an increasing joy in living, the goal we have all along blindly sought, and build on earth the fair city we have looked for in a compensatory world beyond.

Our repudiation of supernaturalism must include not merely the crass supernaturalism of men like Mr. Bryan, John Roach Straton and Cardinal Hayes but equally so the sophisticated and rationalized supernaturalism of the Devout Modernists. What we mean is well enough indicated in the article by Professor Henry N. Wieman on "Is Sin Out of Date?", in the *Christian Century* for March 14, 1929. Here Professor Wieman says that: "Morality is the living of life in such a way as to adjust human interests

[1] Otto, *Things and Ideals,* p. 290.

to one another. Religion is the living of life in such a way as not only to adjust human interests to one another, but also to adjust human interests to the requirements of that cosmic process, or extra-human factor, upon which we are dependent." As far as the writer can see, nothing whatever is gained by giving up the Fundamentalist aspiration to do something immediately pleasing to Yahweh and substituting this Modernist aspiration to serve the extra-human factor in the cosmos. This extra-human cosmic factor of Professor Wieman is just as indeterminate and just as confusing as the Fundamentalist God or Professor Mather's Administrator of the Cosmos. Man cannot work intelligently or constructively with materials the nature and manifestations of which he does not know. Man must confine himself absolutely and resolutely to considerations arising out of his own nature and the adjustment of that nature to the physical environment and the social surroundings. We need not deny that there are extra-human elements existing in the cosmos, but we can only make intelligent and constructive use of those factors and influences which are evident in the nature of man, the processes of life, and the observed facts relative to the physical universe. It is difficult for the writer to be very favorably impressed by the contention of Professor Wieman that when he is talking about the "extra-human factor" in the universe he is not thinking at all of the supernatural. In the end, it comes down to the same thing as the cosmic God or the Administrator of the Cosmos. Even if Professor Wieman does not regard this concept as supernatural, it has the same vicious effect in diverting the attention of man from secular and human affairs.

The only extra-human factors which can be envisaged with any intelligence or precision are, of course, the physical environment and the plant and animal kingdoms. If

we were to seek guidance in adjusting ourselves to the extra-human factors we should turn, then, not to the theologians but to the anthropogeographers, the botanists and the zoölogists. If we were to take Professor Wieman literally at his word we would not have recourse to a Kant, Schliermarcher, Harnack, Brown or Wieman but to a Ritter, Ratzel, Vidal de la Blache, Lucian Febvre, Ellsworth Huntington, J. Russell Smith, Patrick Geddes, De Vries, W. M. Wheeler, T. H. Morgan, H. M. Parshley, J. A. Thomson and the like. In actual practice today, with man's triumph over the other members of the animal kingdom, the only extra-human factor of any significance is the geographical setting of a culture.

We shall not make much progress by abandoning dogmatic theism and supernaturalism unless we likewise relinquish loyalty to their bastard child, the transcendental and idealistic philosophy which has come down to us in ever more elaborate form from the time of Socrates. Just as long as we admit the validity of entities and categories in human life which are held to have existed anterior to man and to operate entirely independently of time, space, the nature of man and the character of human institutions, we are bound to remain on the threshold of theism and supernaturalism. If one allows a Modernist to toy with transcendentalism and absolutes, he may be assured that it will not be long until he has made a God for himself.

III. THE NEW PERSPECTIVE AND RELIGIOUS READJUSTMENT

It follows as a matter of course that such epoch-making changes as we have described above with relation to the status of orthodox religion and Devout Modernism in the light of modern science and critical thought, make necessary a searching re-examination of the place and function

of religion in modern society. In the first place, the new view of matters makes it very evident that the clergyman can no longer pretend to be a competent expert in the way of discovering the nature, will and operations of the new cosmic God. If undertaken and solved at all, this is a problem for the coöperative endeavors of the natural scientist and the cosmic philosopher of the Dewey tradition. The theologian at best can only be a competent second- or third-hand interpreter of the facts and implications gathered about the cosmos and its laws by specialists in science and philosophy. In the old days, when it was thought that God might be reached and understood through prayer, sacrifice or revelation, the clergyman or theologian was indeed "the man of God" who could make clear the will of the Deity to believers. But now, when God must be sought, if at all, in terms of the findings of the test-tube, the compound microscope, the interferometer, the radium tube and Einstein's equations, the conventional clergyman is rather hopelessly out of place in the premises. Therefore, it is apparent that the intelligent and educated theologians must surrender their age-long pretension to special, if not unique, competence in clearing up the problem of the nature of God and His laws. They can at best be little more than ringside spectators of the observatory and the laboratory, doing their best in the way of an amateurish appreciation of what is going on therein.

We may concede the contention of Dr. Dieffenbach that theology is a very important phase of religion but we can scarcely admit that there longer remains any function for the independent theologian. The presentation of "orderly and systematic ideas about religion" must now be looked upon as the province of the social scientist and social philosopher. We should, of course, grant Dr. Dieffenbach

the right to continue his useful work in the new religious era. We would merely insist on his adopting the correct professional label.

Next to the revelation of the nature of God and his ways, the most time-honored function of the so-called "man of God" has been to unravel God's will with respect to human conduct and to inculcate the absolute and inflexible principles which should guide personal morality, in order that the soul of the individual might be assured of an ultimate refuge in the New Jerusalem. This was a perfectly rational and logical function for religion when it was commonly assumed to be axiomatic: (1) that the purpose of moral conduct was to insure the salvation of the soul, and (2) that the supreme and complete guide to moral living was to be discovered in Holy Scriptures. Neither of these postulates can be sustained today. There seems to be no ground whatever for the orthodox views of a bodily or spiritual immortality and the imminence of a literal heaven and hell. Hence, the basic objective of right living can no longer be regarded as the insurance of spiritual salvation. On the contrary, the fundamental purpose of the good life is to secure the maximum amount of happiness for the greatest possible number here upon this earth. Therefore, it is readily apparent that accurate guidance to the good life can not be sought in ancient Scriptures or provided by specialists in Holy Writ. The moral code of the future must be supplied by the specialists in mundane happiness, namely: biologists, physiologists, psychiatrists, educators, social scientists and students and practitioners of æsthetics.

Some who frankly admit the incompetence of the clergyman and the theologian in the way of providing original and conclusive guidance to moral conduct contend, nevertheless, that religion can exercise a very valuable service in interpreting and popularizing the findings of the spe-

cialists in human happiness. This may be true, to a certain extent, but many qualifications would have to be noted. Many phases of guidance to complete human happiness would necessarily be a highly technical and individual matter, to be handled by medical and other experts in relation to individual cases and problems, and would scarcely be adapted to comprehensive general interpretation or exhortation.

A much better case can be made for the service which may be rendered by religion in inculcating an interest in and respect for such broad and scarcely debatable moral conceptions as justice, honesty, pacifism, coöperation, kindliness, beauty, etc. Professor Kirsopp Lake has well stated the case for the desirability of having religion relinquish interest in sumptuary moral control and assume responsibility for the advancement of more profound and general moral principles:[2]

> One man may find much comfort in tobacco, while another may injure himself by smoking: one may err by playing too much, and another by never playing at all. I doubt whether the men of tomorrow will try to interfere with each other on these points, knowing that the thing which matters is ability to do good work, and that one man can do his best work in one way, another otherwise. Many of the things Puritans condemn are strictly indifferent. The religion of tomorrow will recognize this, it will give good advice to individuals, but not lay down general rules for universal observance.
>
> On the other hand, it may have a sterner standard in business, industry and finance. It may insist more loudly that honesty applies to the spirit of business, not merely to its letter. It may even demand that men must be as trustworthy in advertisements, business announcements and journalistic reporting as they are in private affairs. For these are the questions of morals which are the issues of life and death for the future. They are not covered by the teaching of Jesus or of historic Christianity, for neither ever discussed problems which did not exist in their time. Some of the principles which have

[2] Lake, *The Religion of Today and Tomorrow*, p. 173.

been laid down by them will play a part in the solution of these problems but probably others will also be needed, certainly the actual solutions will contain new elements, and the religion of tomorrow will have to look for them.

One can scarcely quarrel with Professor Lake on theoretical and logical grounds, but there is an important practical consideration, namely, that the modern social and economic order is based to no inconsiderable degree upon intrigues, shrewd business enterprise, relentless competition, unreasoning patriotism and class selfishness. It can scarcely be expected that the custodians of the modern order, who provide the chief pecuniary support for our religious institutions and organizations, will contribute with enthusiasm to a movement designed to cut at the root of many of the principles and practices which they hold most sacred and indispensable. Before religion could achieve much in this field it would be necessary to organize and carry on a very definite program of education in the principles of social ethics broadly conceived. Thus far, however, few clergymen so orientated and motivated have been able to maintain their position long enough to make much headway in this educating process. As far as the writer is aware, there has been no marked or organized effort to draft the services of Sherwood Eddy, Norman Thomas, Kirby Page, Bouck White, Jerome Davis, Ralph Harlow, Harry Ward, David D. Vaughan and others of their kind and induct them into the pastorates of great metropolitan churches.

The supervision of religion over recreation, which has in the past been exercised chiefly in making arbitrary decisions as to what are immoral and what are moral forms of recreation and in closely scrutinizing and controlling the activities of individuals in these fields, must now be sharply challenged. The orthodox religious criteria as to moral

and immoral forms of recreation were not based upon physiological, psychological or social grounds, but upon theological considerations which have little or no validity in the light of modern knowledge. Religion, having no competence in the matter of determining the nature of moral and immoral conduct in the light of modern secularism, obviously can not apply its decisions in this field to the realm of recreation. Recreation, like morality, with which it has been so closely associated in the past, is a field for the secular expert and must be handed over to biologists, medical experts, psychologists, social scientists and æsthetes. Religion at most could scarcely go further than to proclaim the general desirability of healthy and adequate exercise and the exhibition of a proper spirit of good sportsmanship.

Another function of religion in the past which has received much support relates to its æsthetic services. It is held that the ritual, pageantry and liturgy of the church provide a relatively economical and highly valuable æsthetic service to humanity. This is, of course, an argument which can be far better justified from the Catholic standpoint than from the Protestant, as the Protestant churches have given up most of the splendor of the Catholic service. This argument boils down to the allegation that the church is in a position to "put on a better show" for the populace and at a lower cost than any other comparable secular organization. While there is much to be said in support of this view in regard to the services of the church in earlier periods, it would seem that this function may be, and indeed is, now achieved more adequately and cheaply by various secular enterprises, such as the grand opera, the theater, the movies and various types of public pageantry. Further, many contend that the attitude of fear, awe and solemnity generated by religious ritual and pageantry

produces a fundamentally unhealthy state of mind which, to a large degree, offsets the æsthetic service contributed thereby.

We have already referred in several connections to the poetic interpretation of religion set forth by Mr. John Cowper Powys. He believes that the function of religion is to provide the sceptic with a method of poetic contemplation of the great illusions of humanity during the life history of the race. This certainly constitutes a noble and dignified statement of the case for religion, and there are doubtless many who find that religion, thus conceived, gives life a deeper and richer content. Yet one can scarcely imagine that this view of religion will be able to give satisfaction to any large number of individuals. Not one person in a thousand who approaches religion from a sentimental point of view can attain Mr. Powys' scepticism, and it is equally true that few who are as sceptical as Mr. Powys are capable of a sentimental attitude toward religion. Further, if one believes that religion should be the dynamic basis of effective social reform, it is obvious that Mr. Powys' negativistic conception of religion is completely unadapted to fulfilling this function.

Therefore, it would seem definitely established that the conventional functions of traditional religion have well-nigh completely evaporated in the light of contemporary knowledge and intellectual attitudes. It must be conceded that the theologian is not longer needed to chart out and control the supernatural world and supernatural powers, inasmuch as the existence of such entities can scarcely be established. It is equally apparent that the theologian can not by himself locate, describe or interpret the new cosmic God believed by some to be implied in the discoveries of modern science. Neither can the theologian supply detailed moral guidance in the way of indicating how man

must live in order to achieve the maximum degree of happiness here on earth. Nor can the church support its ancient pretensions to guiding and controlling recreation or in supplying popular pageantry. This raises the important question as to what religion can legitimately engage upon in harmony with the tenets of an open-minded and contemporaneous secular attitude.

It would seem that the most reasonable field for the functioning of religion in contemporary society is in the way of providing for the mass organization of the group sentiment of mankind in support of the larger principles of kindliness, sympathy, right, justice, honesty, decency and beauty. Just what constitute the essentials of right and justice and the like would have to be determined by the appropriate scientific and æsthetic experts, but these experts have little potency or opportunity in the way of arousing ardent popular support for their findings. Religion has thus far been the most powerful agency in stirring and directing the collective will of mankind. Therefore, we may probably contend with safety that the function of a liberalized religion, divested of its archaic supernaturalism, would be to serve as the public propaganda adjunct of social science and æsthetics. The social sciences and æsthetics would supply specific guidance as to what ought to be done, while religion would produce the motive power essential to the translation of abstract theory into practical action. There would, however, be ever present the problem of restraining this educational propaganda and keeping it in thorough conformity with the recommendations of science and art. The function of religion, then, would be to organize the mass mind and group activities in such a fashion as to benefit secular society and not to please God, at least not God as he has

been understood and expounded in the orthodox religions of the past.

It would appear to the writer that the problem is not so much one of the nobility or the validity of this function of religion or one of its value to society, but rather the question of whether or not religion can successfully carry out such a type of social service. The issue is primarily one of whether an organization, hitherto almost exclusively devoted to the understanding, control and exploitation of the supernatural world, can be completely transformed into an institution designed for the purpose of increasing the secular happiness of mankind here on earth. Such a transformation would imply a complete revolution in the premises and activities of religion, and we have little or no evidence from the past to give us any definite assurance that so profound a transition is practicable or attainable. The issue is fundamentally whether organized religion can be held together and can operate without a sense of mystery and a fear of the unknown. The thrill from the mysterious has been the core of all past religion, and we have nothing to give any final assurance that religion can persist without this dominating element of mystery and fear. Certain writers contend that there will always remain a certain fringe of mystery, particularly in the way of unsolved problems, as well as the general mystery inherent in the riddle of the universe. Yet, as Professor Shotwell has well indicated in his *Religious Revolution of Today*, the mysteries of modern science are quite different in their premises, manifestations and psychic effects from the conventional religious mystery based upon an emotional reaction to a hypothetical supernatural world. The reaction to the mysteries of science does not promote that group-forming tendency which Ward, Hankins, Durkheim and others have shown to be so characteristic an effect and

accompaniment of supernatural religion. Abstruse scientific perplexities and the riddle of the universe may promote advanced forms of cerebral effort but they are not likely to evoke a sentimental thrill or to generate a crusading passion in human assemblages.

Indeed, some leading social scientists contend that the divergence between the old supernaturalism and the new secular program is so great that no real common ground can be found. Hence, they argue that we should not contaminate and confuse the new secular type of ethical enterprise by denominating it religion. This is certainly a consideration which is entitled to receive serious thought. The chief defense which can be made of the retention of the term religion, as applied to the new secular conception of a dynamic urge to social betterment, is that it will soften the shock of the transition if we are able to preserve the older terminology with new implications and outlook. Whether or not this is an adequate justification for the retention of the term religion to cover a conception quite different from its past connotation, the writer will not assume to say. Another argument for preserving the religious terminology is that we should thereby be able to make use of existing ecclesiastical organization and equipment. The problem which arises here is as to whether existing religious institutions are not so inseparably attached to outworn conceptions and practices as to make them more of a liability than an asset to religious reconstruction. Certainly, there has been much confusion engendered in the minds of those who have surrendered traditional notions of religion and yet are unwilling to admit that religion must become nothing more or less than the inspirational basis of social ethics. Such writers have tended to flounder hopelessly in search of that hypothetical but non-existent area, intermediate between adjust-

ment to the supernatural world and the betterment of human society. Such confusion has particularly been the bane of the more radical wing of the Devout Modernists.

There are many who believe that religion of whatever variety is bound to pass away and that its place will be taken by various secular cults organized about some particular social reform program; in short, that religion will be supplanted by devotion to the ideals of Capitalism, Rotary, Kiwanis, Service, Socialism, Anarchism and the like. Certainly, there is much to be said for this point of view. These secular programs have the power to enlist that group-forming tendency and to invoke those group loyalties which Hankins, Ward and others look upon as the essential core of religion. Further, many of the Russians seem to have found as much satisfaction in devotion to the Bolshevist principles as they formerly did in subservience to the dogmas of the Greek Catholic Church. We can only say in this regard that time alone will tell whether the socio-economic dogmas and cults will usurp the position formerly occupied by religion. It is too early to speak with any assurance on this point.

IV. CHURCHES IN THE NEW RELIGIOUS AND CULTURAL ORDER

In his extremely interesting work on *Religion Coming of Age* Professor Roy W. Sellars adopts a thoroughly secular and critical point of view which will commend his book to all emancipated intellects. He concludes, however, that we must stand with the existing churches and attempt to achieve religious reconstruction, moral reform and social progress through these present-day ecclesiastical organizations and institutions, though he does not, of course, in any way attempt to defend the existing creeds

and sectarian divisions of the Christian Church. This suggestion raises the very interesting question as to whether a truly contemporaneously-minded person can actually stand by the churches even if he desires to do so. What church, for example, could Professor Sellars himself stand by without either ostracism or intellectual humiliation? The writer cannot conceive of his being welcome in any church save those maintained by the more advanced wings of the Unitarians and Universalists and in the synagogues presided over by some of the more radical reformed rabbis. No evangelical sect could possibly tolerate him, nor would he find cordiality even in the fold of the Congregationalists and Episcopalians, though a few rare Episcopalian rectors like Karl Reiland or Elwood Worcester might make him intellectually comfortable. Even the majority of the Universalists and Unitarians today would repudiate his basic contention that man has no cosmic companion, namely, no knowable God upon whom he may rely and depend for protection and guidance.

We may well admit the potential value of exploiting the existing resources in the way of ecclesiastical equipment and running machinery, but it is a moot question as to whether we can win over such existing resources to the cause and service of the new rational religion. Adjustments of this sort call for a degree of compromise that is usually destructive to intellectual integrity and the consistent maintenance of a thoroughly up-to-date attitude. Some of our greatest Modernist preachers today are compelled to stultify their theology and repress their inate liberalism in order to make a working success of their church and pastoral duties. We are not in any sense averse to seeing the churches exploited by thorough-going Modernism, but we doubt the feasibility of any such proposal. Certainly, any arrangement which purchased the use of the present

church machinery at the price of the surrender of positions essential to the reconstruction of religion would be manifestly deplorable.

The church must face a number of definite challenges inherent in the new order of things, quite independent of and in addition to that reconstruction of doctrines forced by the growth of secular knowledge. In the first place, the church has lost one source of its earlier strength in the disappearance of many of its old social functions. In the former agrarian age the church was the center of community life and of much of social recreation. It could rely not only upon the fear of the unknown but also upon man's craving for sociability. All this has tended to disappear with the rise of urban life and the substitution of other forms of social outlet for those which the church formerly supplied. There was a time when the church was indispensable to the social life of man, whereas it is today very largely an irksome distraction from his other social obligations and interests. This matter has been handled very intelligently and lucidly in Walter Lippmann's recent book, *A Preface to Morals*.

Even more serious is the challenge which has come to the churches as result of the rise of new secular interests, far more extensive and varied than were ever known to man in the pre-urban age. These are indirectly reducing man's absorption in religion by shifting his interest to these novel secular concerns. There is little doubt that the automobile has in various ways been more effective in undermining the old religious morality than all the preachings and writings of sceptics and Modernists. The disintegrating influence of these new secular interests is especially deadly and effective because of its indirect nature. It is subtle and often unnoticed, and hence does not arouse the defensive reactions which are provoked by the direct at-

tacks upon traditional religion. Professor John Herman Randall, Jr., in *Current History* for June, 1929, has given us an illuminating summary of the effect of these new secular interests upon the old religion:

> Yet industrialism and city life have been far more subversive than all the scientific theories put together. We are all too familiar with theological difficulties. We are apt to overlook the real religious revolution of the past forty years, the crowding of religion into a minor place by the host of secular faiths and interests. For every man alienated from the Church by scientific ideas, there are dozens dissatisfied with its social attitudes, and hundreds who, with no intellectual doubts, have found their lives fully occupied with the other interests and diversions of the machine age. What does it matter that earnest men have found a way to combine older beliefs with the spirit of science, if those beliefs have ceased to express anything vital in men's experience, if the older religious faith is irrelevant to all they really care for? A truly intelligent Fundamentalist, indeed, would leave biology alone as of little influence. He would instead try to abolish the automobiles and movies and Sunday papers and golf links that are emptying our churches. Even when the Church embraces the new interests, it seems to be playing a losing game. There is little of specifically religious significance in the manifold activities of the modern institutional church; a dance for the building fund is less of a religious experience than a festival in honor of the patron saint. And any minister knows that his "social activities" spring less from real need than from the fervent desire to attract and hold members. The church itself has been secularized. Its very members continue a half-hearted support, from motives of traditional attachment, of personal loyalty to the minister, of social prestige, because they do not want to live in a churchless community.

Unquestionably, another important cause of the lessening of the prestige and influence of the church today is to be discerned in the decline of the intellectual caliber of the clergy. There was a time in America when the clergy

constituted the real intellectual aristocracy of the country. It will be regarded by most candid persons as a kindly and humane observation when we assert that at least no such claim can be advanced for the contemporary American clergy as a group.

The church must further face the rivalry of new techniques for the dissemination of religious and ethical doctrines. There was a time when the pulpit possessed something like a monopoly of the discussion not only of religious but of other moral and public issues. Today we have an extensive development of the public lecture forum, university extension courses and institutions for adult education, to say nothing of the press, which, as a strong social factor, is primarily a product of the last half century. If religion is to be a secularized cult devoted to the cause of social betterment there are many who believe that the lecture platform and the public forum are better suited than the church as a medium for disseminating doctrines of this sort. Without taking any dogmatic position regarding the relative efficiency or propriety of these two agencies it is certain that the new secular instruments of public illumination are bound to intrude in differing degrees upon the province of the church and the pastor. Then, there are not a few progressive experts in religious education who contend that if the public schools were properly organized and conducted they would perform the function of character education, for the development of which we have hitherto formally relied upon the church.

Still another challenge to the churches, and the one which may be the most fatal of all, is that which is inherent in the new technology and particularly in the new methods for the dissemination of information. The most direct menace to the church in this field is to be found in the radio and its potential uses. Formerly, a man of religious

inclinations was at the mercy of the preaching of the local parson. However intolerable the homiletic exercises of this local man of God, there was no feasible escape. Today, the same person may turn on his radio and listen to one of the ablest and most distinguished preachers in the country delivering an eloquent and pleasing discourse. There is a natural and inevitable incentive to prefer listening to the great preacher instead of being bored by the local pastor. Still further, the radio offers greater economies of time and effort. One need not bother to dress elaborately to confront the radio and he is saved all the time and effort involved in the trip between home and church. He may sit down comfortably in an easy chair, light his pipe and turn on the radio only at the moment when the preacher begins his discourse. It might be mentioned as an incidental advantage that the person at home also escapes the collection. Not only is the radio a challenge to the church from the standpoint of the church-goer; it offers an equal menace from the standpoint of the preacher. The great preacher who is reaching potentially thousands or millions through broadcasting over the radio does not necessarily have to deliver his sermon before a congregation. He may give it out in isolation in the studio of the broadcasting station. Indeed, he is likely to give a better account of himself over the radio if he does not have to take into consideration a specific audience confronting him in an ecclesiastical edifice. The appeal of the radio is, of course, rendered the more effective today when, as we have seen above, there is no significant social incentive to church attendance. It would seem to the writer probable that the challenge of the radio to the churches is likely to be much more serious in the case of the Protestant churches than with the Catholic Church. The Protestant cults have tended to concentrate worship primarily in the preaching

service which is peculiarly well-adapted to broadcasting. On the other hand, the elaborate ritual and liturgy of the Catholic Church and the intimacy involved in the rites of confession can scarcely be reproduced with any propriety or effect over the radio. The social magic of Catholicism can be manipulated only under proper auspices on ecclesiastical premises, making use of the appropriate instruments of sanctity. It may well be that the radio will prove a greater factor in the strength of Catholicism than the Jesuit Order or any other militant Catholic organization designed to recover Christendom from the Protestants. Preaching plays a very small part in the Catholic service, and when the priest does, on infrequent occasions, actually preach to his congregation, such preaching often takes the form of a doctrinal or moral harangue very ill-adapted to wholesale dissemination over the radio.

In Christian Science Churches the sermon has really been dispensed with. As Morrison I. Swift observes in his *The Evil Religion Does:*

> Christian Science more than any other church, more even than the Episcopal and the Catholic churches, has recognized the danger of ideas and bravely abolished them. In Christian Science the everywhere dying sermon is wholly dead. It now reads the entrancing lullabies of its inspiring departed goddess, Mrs. Eddy, whose works are chastely free from the incendiary element of intelligence and therefore soothing safe and holy.

Nevertheless, the Christian Science reading service is admirably adapted to broadcasting, and it cannot well remain so immune to the beckoning call of the radio as the Catholic mass.

Of course, the fact that the churches may ultimately disappear need not be construed as a contingency which would be fatal to religion. It is not a matter of great im-

portance as to what instrument is utilized in the forwarding of the new religion, provided its doctrines and activities are able to enlist an efficient agency for their advancement. If something more effective than the old time church can be discovered, so much the better. These various forms of challenge to the church are not necessarily equally menacing to religion. What we have been concerned with in the above paragraphs is to indicate that the churches will have to reckon with novel and insidious competitors and enemies. Some of the so-called "billboard preachers," like the Rev. C. F. Reisner, have attempted to exploit modern technology and publicity methods in the service of the churches. Such persons are almost invariably Fundamentalists. Hence, their work has little relation to the problem of the churches and the religion of tomorrow.

V. SHOULD WE REGRET THE PASSING OF THE OLD RELIGIOUS ORDER?

It is difficult to see how any honest and informed person, thoroughly alive to contemporary tendencies, can doubt that modern knowledge has spelled the doom of orthodox religion of any type whatsoever. It is merely a matter of how long the forces of obscurantism can defy truth and foster and perpetuate ignorance and error. The question immediately arises as to whether a recognition of the ultimate and inevitable crumbling of the old supernaturalism should be regarded as a cause for gloom and for lugubrious comment. The answer may be unhesitatingly given in the negative. No phase of intellectual progress possesses the same potential cause for social rejoicing as the destruction of orthodoxy. There cannot be the slightest doubt that religion in the past has produced far more suffering and misery than it has ever relieved or eliminated.

It has doubtless been the greatest disaster associated with the fact of man's slow and gradual evolution from a state of bestiality and abject ignorance. It has been the most deplorable by-product of the process of cultural evolution. As we have pointed out above, Mr. Kirby Page has, in his *Jesus or Christianity?*, shown that even the Christian religion has been a decided and unquestionable social liability.

We now have an opportunity to divest religion of its barbarous traits and its restrictive and hampering conceptions, while at the same time we may conserve any ultimate values or social utility which may reside in the group aspects of the religious impulse. Any friend of religion with an up-to-date mind can but rejoice at the prospect of ultimate emancipation from the antique religious psychosis. The reconstruction of religion which is in prospect would at one and the same time relieve religion of the notorious defects which present a legitimate point of attack by the enemies of all religion and would allow us to conserve any potential social benefits which may inhere in a socialized and secular religion.

The question is often raised as to whether this religious revolution even if theoretically desirable, will not come in too rapid and complete a fashion, thus threatening social chaos. To the trained cultural historian and sociologist this question has no meaning whatever. In society institutional changes cannot take place until we are culturally prepared to receive them. Man will surrender the old supernaturalism only when the newer knowledge has been sufficiently developed and so thoroughly disseminated as to undermine the old faith. In other words, the old can disappear only when the new is effective enough to dislodge the former.

It is held by many that the majority of mankind will always remain essentially superstitious and victims of

supernaturalism. While not optimistic with respect to the possibilities of rapid intellectual emancipation on the part of the majority of men, nevertheless, the writer seriously questions whether we may assume the indefinite prolongation of the domination of man by superstition and gross supernaturalism. Even the most benighted southern Baptist of today is almost secular in his daily life and attitudes as compared to the medieval peasant or the unconverted Indians of America, though he may formally adhere to a primitive cult.

Many will expect the writer to lay down in some detail the essentials of a practicable secularized religion. Such an obligation is not, however, inherently assumed by the author. His chief task has been to indicate what must be cleared away before any type of rational and socially serviceable religion can be formulated and applied. If anyone is, however, seriously interested in the opinions of the writer in this field, he would say that he believes that Unitarian Humanism will serve admirably as the basis for the religion of the future. In expressing himself in this manner the writer must disclaim any intention whatever of serving as a propagandist for this specific religious development which has been the outgrowth of the activities of Dr. Dietrich and others who share these same views. The writer arrived at his basic conclusions in this field before he was even aware of the existence of the movement known as Unitarian Humanism, and he is in no sense personally affiliated with it. It simply appears to the writer to be, beyond all comparison, the most sincere, intelligent, consistent and promising effort thus far achieved in the way of harmonizing an earnest religious impulse with the outstanding facts and attitudes produced by modern knowledge. If anyone can devise a more attractive expression of the newer point of view the writer will be the first to welcome it. We reproduce below the authoritative sum-

mary of the essential principles of Unitarian Humanism as set forth by Dr. Dietrich in his sermon on "The Advance of Humanism" delivered in October, 1927.

1. Humanism believes in the supreme worth of human life, and that man therefore must be treated as an end, not as a means to some other end. Man is the highest product of the creative process which comes within our knowledge, and therefore Humanism recognizes nothing which commands a higher allegiance. And the Humanist insists that this worth of man is intrinsic to human nature. Whatever worth has been ascribed to man in the past has been founded on man's relation to some superior power and not found inherent in man himself. In the past, men found their inspiration, not in being men, but in being subjects or children of God. But our idea of the glory of humanity is not based on any reflection from above. We see man as the highest product of the creative process, we know of nothing above or beyond him, the highest things of which we can dream are but the products of his mind, and so man should be the end of our allegiance and our endeavor.

This means that man is not to be treated as a means toward any other end. For instance, he is not to be regarded as a means to the glory of some superior being. The old catechism says the chief end of man is to glorify God and enjoy him forever, and that is typical of all the older religions. God is the end, man is the means. It matters not what happens to man, so long as God is glorified. But if there be a God, man cannot know who or what he is, or how to glorify him. He has no actual knowledge of anything above or beyond himself; and therefore even though there be a God the best way to glorify him would be to glorify the highest product of his creation. So Humanism believes that the chief end of man is not to glorify God and enjoy him forever, but rather to glorify human life and enjoy it as long as it lasts. Again man is not to be treated as a means to some cosmic end. If the whole universe is moving toward "some far-off divine event," we do not know what the event is, and so cannot make any valuable contribution toward it; except, as in the case of God, we cannot imagine a better contribution than the enrichment and ennoblement of human nature, which again is the highest product of the cosmic process thus far. Also man is not to be treated as

a means to a world order, either economic, political, or social. These things are means to the ends of human life, human life is not a means to their ends. And in this principle lies Humanism's attitude toward the whole social system. Every institution —the state, the church, the school, the corporation, the labor union; and every social process—marriage, suffrage, immigration, prohibition, banking—stand or fall according to their contribution to human life. Do they foster, enlarge, liberate, ennoble the lives of men? Then they stand justified and call for protection and support. Do they weaken, enslave, impoverish, degrade human life? Then they stand condemned and should be destroyed. Human life is the thing of supreme worth in the world, and must be treated as the end of all human endeavor. This is the corner-stone of the religion of Humanism.

2. Humanism is the effort to understand human experience by means of human inquiry. This stands in direct contrast to the method of the older religions, which is known as revelation. Nearly all religions, baffled by the strange experiences and perplexing problems of life, have resorted to revelation, either in the form of oracles or books or institutions or priests. Through these they believed that God actually spoke to them, revealing truths about the world and human experience. But intelligent people today do not take seriously the claims of supernatural revelation. They know that all the knowledge acquired by the race so far has been the result of human inquiry, and so Humanism substitutes human inquiry for divine revelation as the means of finding truth and understanding human experience. Instead of consulting oracles, reading supposed divine books, bowing before priests, trusting mahatmas, they investigate facts, verify these facts, and formulate hypotheses which the facts suggest. So Humanism depends entirely upon inquiry for its body of knowledge; and while the body of knowledge is very incomplete it is gradually and constantly growing. And of late years it has increased by leaps and bounds. This humanistic method has added more to the sum total of knowledge in the last century than the old method added in a hundred centuries. And the future promises still more rapid strides. The gates to the realm of knowledge have just recently been opened by the scientific method, and we are about to enter. It is only within the last few years that we have gained any real knowledge about ourselves and the world

in which we live. And as this knowledge increases and becomes potent in the lives of the many, it will sweep the race along to higher and higher levels, to mounts of achievement that are beyond our view.

3. Humanism is the effort to enrich human experience to the utmost capacity of man and of his environment; that is, the primary concern of Humanism is human development. It has no blind faith in the perfectibility of man, but it believes that his present condition can be immeasurably improved. It recognizes the limitations of human nature, but insists upon developing man's native talents to their highest possible point. In fact, it recognizes the varying capacities of different people, and does not expect to develop all to an equal degree of achievement, but insists upon developing each to the utmost of his latent ability. It sees also the limitations in man's environment for indefinite improvement, but holds that within certain limits the environment can be arranged so as to be much less a handicap to his complete development than it is today. In short, the Humanist has a vision of what life might be upon this planet if all our intelligence were brought to bear upon its improvement, and he has faith that this vision may be realized through the responsibility and effort of men themselves.

4. Humanism accepts the responsibility for the conditions of human life and relies entirely upon human effort for their improvement. The Humanist makes no attempt to shove the responsibility for the present miserable conditions of human life onto some God or some cosmic order. He fully realizes that the situation is in our own hands, and that practically all the evils of the world have been brought upon men by themselves. He frankly assumes the responsibility for the havoc of the late war, and realizes that if peace is ever to be a permanent condition of human society, man himself must create the instruments of peace. He frankly assumes the responsibility for the injustices inherent in our present social and economic order, and knows that if ever these are to be eliminated, it must be done by man himself. He frankly assumes the responsibility for the way in which our social life is regulated, and knows that if such flagrant and horrible miscarriages of justice as we have recently witnessed are to be avoided, man himself must create the machinery. In fact, he even assumes the responsibility for the feelings of envy and hatred and

cruelty and murder which make these things possible, and knows that if ever we are to approach a state of brotherhood, in which justice and good will shall prevail, man himself must eradicate the one attitude and foster the other. Humanism finds no other place of responsibility than human shoulders and no other hope of improvement than human effort. Humanism looks straight into the face of the world and of human life, sees its good and its bad, and expecting no help from without, determines to make the world a fit place in which to live and human life worth living.

In some of its aspects Humanism may not be so comforting as the older forms of religion have been; but it will develop men and not mollycoddles. All these centuries we have been coddled and weakened by the invention of comforting philosophies of escape. It is time that we saw things as they really are. We are alone in a terrifying and uncaring universe; it is for us to create and sustain whatever can make human life worth while. Our lives are very insecure upon this little planet as it swings through space, and upon us rests the hard and glorious task of deepening and enriching them. In spite of an indifferent universe, we ourselves must keep alive all the good the past hath had, and add to it such good as we can create.

So let us stand upon our feet like men and look fair and square at life; see the world as it really is, its beauties and its ugliness, and be not afraid of it. Let us decide to conquer the world by intelligence, and not be subdued by the terror that comes from it. The world needs many things today, but above all it needs Humanism, which guarantees a fearless outlook and a free intelligence. The virtues corresponding to the points which I have made are knowledge, kindliness, courage and service. These things the world needs. But these are not abstract things. The only knowledge and kindliness and courage the world knows is that which we ourselves create and sustain. Apart from us they do not exist. But with these tools, we can build a beautiful home for mankind on this temporary earth, only we must heed that fundamental command of Humanism, "Thou must do the good that thou cravest."

Humanism has vindicated itself in action as well as in thought. What men like Dietrich, Reese and others have done to found the new theology—if it can be called such—

has been paralleled by the practical achievements of John Haynes Holmes in the Community Church in New York City, which is the finest example of the new religion as a going concern.

VI. CONCLUSIONS

We have now passed in review what seem to the writer to be the chief problems of religion in the light of contemporary knowledge and modern cultural conditions. We have indicated the setting of the whole matter in the cultural contrasts inherent in our present social order; briefly summarized the social costs of orthodox religion; outlined the manner in which religion arose in human culture; examined the validity of the claims for the Bible as a revelation of divine will and wisdom; considered the pretensions of the orthodox system and its status in the perspective of our present-day knowledge of the cosmos and man; shown the degree of conflict which exists between science and the various existing forms of religion in America; made clear the wholly untenable attitude towards Jesus maintained by the Fundamentalists and Devout Modernists alike; and stated a few of the outstanding readjustments which must be made by any religious system which will be in accord with the contemporary intellectual orientation.

The major portion of the book has been frankly historical and critical. For this the author offers no apology whatever. What is needed most today in the religious field is a wrecking-machine which will clear the ground of the archaic intellectual and institutional debris which has been accumulating for more than fifty thousand years. In his amiable comment on the writer's article in *Current History* for March, 1929, Bishop McConnell remarked that he regarded the writer as a person chiefly interested in

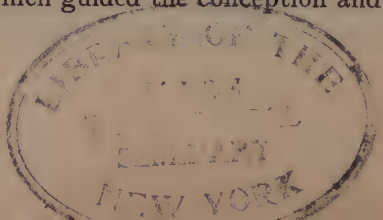
wielding a broom in order to demolish the cobwebs of antique orthodoxy. He went on to say that: "A broom is an enormously useful implement, even if we cannot classify it among the instruments of precision." On the whole, the writer is willing to accept this characterization by the affable Bishop as essentially correct, though he would be entirely willing to match the precision of his broom against that of the quills of the Devout Modernists within the fold of Methodism. Until the intellectual ruins of Fundamentalism and Devout Modernism have been swept away, there can be no intelligent beginning made in the great task of constructing the new order of things religious. The writer admits that much may be learned from a study of the developments, errors and misinterpretations of the past, but we are now at the parting of the ways. If religion is to survive in the contemporary world, it must be built on the new knowledge and adjusted to contemporary culture. In short, it must be a twentieth century religious system.

Many will accuse the writer of being over dogmatic and cocksure, but it is doubtful if this charge will stand up under careful and candid scrutiny. In some portions of the book the writer has indeed been dogmatic, but in others he has taken a most tentative attitude in his statements. We are in a position to be dogmatic with respect to the well-established facts of history and scholarship relative to the history of religions, biblical criticism and scientific discoveries. There is no reason for according respect to untenable anachronisms or for hesitation in branding them as such. With regard to unsolved problems, either of human knowledge or religious reconstruction, the writer will have been found to be appropriately humble and tenative in his statements. The only dogmatism permissible here lies in opposition to the dogmatic cer-

tainty of the religionists. The writer invites comparison between the tenor of such portions of his work and the assurance with which Fundamentalists and Devout Modernists approach the boundaries of knowledge and the problem of the existence and attributes of God.

The writer recognizes that in so vast a field, all of it bristling with disputable points, there is scope for honest and valid differences of opinion. If he has stated his own views with some assurance, it has been chiefly for the sake of clarity and in hope of bringing clashing attitudes into the open with greater precision and candor. He believes that, in any event, he cannot be accused of cowardice or insincerity. He has not failed to include in the book any statement which he believed cogent to the case presented. While recognizing that it is still a delicate and dangerous area of social discussion, the writer has not been controlled in any degree whatever by debilitating considerations of expediency or conventional academic "good taste." On the other hand, he has not launched any critical shafts for the sake of passing verbal effect. Any criticisms, however sharp, are sincerely espoused by the author. He is much more interested in the question of their validity than in that of their relative moderation or severity.

In spite of the predominantly critical tone of the book, honest and intelligent readers will not be likely to fail to discern that the writer entertains only a feeling of the utmost good-will towards those who are attempting to serve as the builders of the new religious order. He asks merely that they shall not employ fragile, decayed and outworn materials in the new structure. To the degree to which the present book will prevent them from so doing, to just this extent will the author have succeeded in realizing the basic purposes which guided the conception and execution of the volume.



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INDEX

Aben Ezra, 150
abortions, 85
Adams, S. H., 56
Adler, F., 349
"Administrator of the Cosmos," 270ff.
Advanced Modernism, essentials of, 339ff., 456ff.
Aesculapius, 127
agnosticism, 260
Ames, E. S., 103, 256, 295, 344
anaesthesia, reproduces religious experience, 115
animatism, 119
animism, 120
Antares, 238
Apocrypha, 168ff.
Armstrong, R. G., 217
art, 96ff.
Asbury, H., 51ff., 211ff., 286ff.
astronomy, achievements of, 11, 235ff.
Astruc, J., 150
atheism, 260
atom, modern theory of, 12, 250
Ayres, C., 244

Bacon, F., 31, 179
Barrett, E. B., 140, 308ff., 321
Barton, B., 78, 385
Bates, E. S., 132, 358
Beard, C. A., 56, 69
"Be Kind Day," 411
beliefs of American ministers, 220ff.
Bell, H. F., 422
Benedict, M. J., 173
Betelgeuse, 238, 244
Betten, F. S., 317
Betts, G. H., 220, 332
Bible,
  actual nature of, 149
  brutalities in, 173
  canon of, 168ff.
  Catholic view of, 140
  importance of, 139ff.
  in relation to modern life, 181ff.
  lost books of, 166
  manuscripts of, 169
  obscene passages in, 174ff.
  orthodox conception of nature of, 144ff.
  secular estimate of, 161ff., 178ff.
  versions of, 172ff.
biblical criticism, history of, 150ff.
bigotry, religious, in politics, 57ff.
biology, 8ff., 12, 232
birth-control, 82
Blanshard, P., 381
Blood, B. P., 115
Board of Temperance, Prohibition and Public Morals of the Methodist Episcopal Church, 59ff.
Bodin, J., 433
Bohr, N., 12, 250
Bowdler, H. M., 79
Bridgman, P. W., 251, 365
Broun, H., 48ff., 60ff., 196, 411
Brown, W. A., 35, 217, 329
Brown, W. M., 35
Bryan, W. J., 21, 144, 231. 326, 375
Buckle, H. T., 313
Burtt, E. A., 374
Bury, J. B., 177
business, 74ff.

Cabell, J. B., 45
canonical books of Bible, 168ff.

Carpenter, E., 117, 390
Catholic Modernism, 329
Catholic schools, 88ff.
Catholic scientists, 311ff.
Catholicism and science, 305ff.
Charles, R. H., 169
Chase, W. D., 71
chemistry, 10
Christian Epic, 134ff.
Christian Science, 94, 353ff.
Christian Socialists, 352
Christianity
  a social liability, 415ff.
  composite nature of, 134, 414
  false claims for, 416ff.
Christmas, origins of, 403
church, loss of earlier social services, 448
church property, 83
churches in new religious era, 447ff.
Clarke, E. Y., 301
Clemens, S. L., 198
Clifford, W. K., 103
Codrington, Bishop, 119
Cohen, M., 201
Comstock, A., 97
Comte, A., 427
conversion, process of, 111, 286ff.
Conybeare, F. C., 394
Cooper, A. A., 80
Copeland, R. S., 61
cosmic companion, absence of, 263
cosmos, estimated size of, 241ff.
creation, details of, 190ff.
culture, contrasts in modern, 7ff.
Cumont, F., 152

dance, alleged evils of, 62ff.
Dante, conception of universe, 193, 207
Darrow, C., 145, 201
Darwin, C., 9
Davis, J., 382
Day, C., 266
Day, J. R., 74, 77, 99
Deists, 99
Dennett, M. W., 71, 412
Devil, origin of, belief in, 120, 130ff.
Devout Modernism, and science, 329ff.
  inferior to orthodoxy in logic, 336
  nature of, 329ff.
Dewey, J., 201, 277, 437
Dieffenbach, A. C., 36, 220, 303, 329, 338, 367, 387, 437
Dietrich, J. H., 45, 122, 127, 257, 284, 290, 329, 333, 455
Douglas, P., 379
Drake, D., 412, 427
Dreiser, T., 97, 175
Durant, W., 412
Durkheim, E., 109

Easley, R., 16
East, E. M., 82
Eddington, A. S., 252, 362
Eddy, M. B., 353ff.
Eddy, S., 378ff.
Edman, I., 427
education, 19, 88ff.
education, religious views of, 225
Einstein, A., 11, 234
Ellis, H., 411, 426
Ethical Culture Society, 349
evolution, cosmic, 233ff.

father, God as heavenly, 111ff.
Feinberg, Rabbi, 329
Fish, A., 386
Fiske, C., 79
flesh and spirit, 293
Flint, R., 259
Ford, H., 367
Forel, A., 426
Forrest, W. M., 164
Fosdick, H. E., 144, 220, 247, 258, 329, 376, 409ff.
Fosdick, R. B., 48, 76
Frazer, J. G., 115
Freud, S., 426
functions of religion in future, 443
Fundamentalists and science, 306, 325ff.

Gardner, P., 117
Gibbs, W., 9

Giddings, F. H., 33
God,
  can we have a new one? 250ff.
  new cosmic, 249ff.
  orthodox notion of, 196ff.
God problem today, 249ff.
gods, origins of, 121ff.
Goldenweiser, A. A., 106
Gospels, as source for life of Jesus, 396
Grant, M., 360
Guignebert, C., 401

Hades, 131
Hall, G. S., 401
Hall, R., 97
Hankins, F. H., 109, 444, 446
Harding, W. G., 54
Harlow, R., 440
Harnack, A., 152, 199
Harper, M. H., 225
Harrison, J., 96, 117
Hartsborne, H., 100
Harvard freshmen, superstitions of, 16
Hatch, E., 117
Hays, A. G., 230
Hayes, Cardinal, 134, 149, 302, 308, 434
Healey, T., 308
heaven, decline of belief in, 281
heavens, Christion notion of, 193, 206
Hebrew language, 155
hell,
  collapse of belief in, 281ff.
  origin of, 130ff.
  orthodox view of, 206
Henry, P., 16
Hicks, G., 67
Hingston, R. W. G., 268
history, 13
Hobbes, T., 150
Hocking, W. E., 11
Holmes, J. H., 460
Hoover, H., 7, 78
human origins,
  orthodox view of, 189ff.
  scientific facts concerning, 268ff.
humanism, astrophysical basis of, 264ff.
Hume, D., 30
Huxley, T. H., 301

Ilgen, K. D., 150
immortality, in light of modern knowledge, 279ff.
immortality of soul, 204, 278ff.
Industrial Revolution, 14ff.
Infallibility, papal, dogma of, 319
Interchurch World Movement, Report on Steel Strike, 1919, 77

James, W., 115, 201
Jayne, W. A., 127
Jefferson, T., 7, 16
Jewish orthodoxy, and science, 328
Jesus,
  a liability to the social gospel, 421ff.
  collapse of rationale of his mission, 243, 255, 405
  contradictory doctrines of, 399ff.
  doctrines of inadequate as guide to social reconstruction, 420
  historicity of, 390ff.
  ignorance of, 407
  irrevelance of views for modern life, 408ff.
  probably a historic character, 403
  slight historic evidence of life and deeds. 390ff.
Jesus stereotype,
  destruction of must precede contemporary religious reconstruction, 418ff.
  nature of, 373ff.
journalism, 20, 94ff.

Kallen, H. M., 54, 124, 128
Kant, I., 11
Keable, R., 385ff., 402
Kent, C. F., 157

Kirkpatrick, C., 3, 368
Ku Klux Klan, 57

labor,
  alleged virtue of, 75
  Christianity and, 78ff.
Lake, K., 439
Langdon-Davies, J., 417
Laski, H. J., 56
law, 17, 68ff.
Lee, I., 412
Leo XIII, Pope, 329
Leuba, J. H., 99
Lévy-Bruhl, L., 121
Lewis, J., 5, 175
Lewis, S., 102
Lippmann, W., 373, 375, 448
lobby, religious, 59ff.
Locke, J., 19
Loisy, A., 152, 329, 401
Lombard, P., 117
Lucretius, 25, 43
Luther, M., 157, 414
Lyell, J., 8
lynchings and religion, 73
Lynd, H. M., 21
Lynd, R. S., 21

Machen, J. G., 327, 330
magic, 115
magic, in Catholic religion, 321ff.
man,
  in new perspective, 261ff., 270ff.
  orthodox conception of, 199ff.
Marett, R. R., 119
Martin, E. D., 11ff., 284
Marshall, C. C., 59
mass, sacrament of, 117
Mather, K. F., 267, 360ff.
Matthews, M. A., 227ff.
Maxwell, J. C.
May, Mark A., 100
McCabe, J., 360, 403
McConnell, F. J., 77, 99, 219, 383, 460
McKinley, W., 55
McLaughlin, R. W., 374
Mecklin, J. M., 299
Mencken, H. L., 56, 57
Menken, S. S., 16
mental and nervous diseases, 87
Methodists, in politics, 59ff.
Middletown, 21, 76, 80, 224
Millikan, R. A., 259, 363ff.
ministers, American, beliefs of, 220ff.
Mithras, 130
Moehlman, C. H., 182ff.
Modernism, types of, 329ff.
Mohammedanism, 68, 416
Moody, D. L., 267
Mooney and Billings, 184
Mormons, 94
Moses and Pentateuch, 158ff.
mythology, 121

Nathan, G. J., 94
Nearing, S., 412
Norris, "Two-gun," 74

obscenity in Bible, 174ff.
O'Connell, Cardinal, 59, 91, 358
Odegard, P., 59
"old stuff" argument, 34ff.
origin of religion, 118ff.
original sin, 208, 290
orthodoxy,
  contemporary strength of, 216ff.
  essentials of, 189ff.
orthodox religion,
  menace of, 42ff.
  undermining of, 233ff.
Osborn, H. F., 226ff., 360, 368
Otto, M. C., 201, 359, 434

Page, K., 42, 79, 173, 322, 377, 415, 453
Paine, T., 149
Paley, W., 116
parental imagery and symbolism in religion, 11ff., 432
Parshley, H. M., 412, 427, 436
Paul, as historic source for life of Jesus, 394ff.
Pearl, R., 426.
Pentateuch, authorship of, 158ff.
Persian dualism, 130ff.
Persian origin of hell and devil, 130ff.

personality, Jesus and, 376, 409ff.
Petrie, J. C., 375
physics, 9ff.
physiology, 13
Phelps, G. F., 62
Pierce, C. S., 10
pilgrimages, Catholic, 324
politics, 17, 53H.
Potter, C. F., 35, 138
poverty, providential theory of, 79ff.
Powys, J. C., 40, 350ff., 442
prayer,
  in modern perspective, 294
  orthodox view of, 210
Prohibition, 72ff.
property, 18
Protestant Fundamentalists and science, 325ff.
psychology, 13
Pupin, M. I., 33, 355, 361

radio and the churches, 450ff.
Randall, J. H., 3, 291, 328, 331, 334, 336, 384, 408, 420
Randall, J. H., Jr., 3, 291, 328, 331, 334, 336, 366, 384, 408, 420, 449
Reconcilers, 355ff.
reconstruction of religion, 428ff.
Reese, C. W., 342, 459
Reiland, K., 367, 447
Reimarus, H. S., 152
Reisner, C. F., 453
relics, Catholic belief in, 321ff.
religion,
  aspects of, 107ff.
  definition of, 103ff.
  development of, 118ff.
  function of in future, 443
  in modern world, 426ff.
  origin of, 118ff.
  orthodox, menace of, 42ff.
  reconstruction of, 429ff.
  revolution in today, 24ff.
religion and sex, 114
religious issue,
  practical nature of, 39ff.
  status today, 3ff., 21ff.
  who are the experts in? 29ff.
Robinson, A. H., 35
Robinson, J. H., 142, 146, 296, 357
Robinson, W. J., 427
Rockefeller, J., 367
Rome, religion in, 24ff.
Royce, J., 11
Russell, B., 362, 412
Ryan, G. J., 54
Ryan, J. A., 338, 353

Sacco and Vanzetti, 184
sacraments of Christian Church, 116ff.
sacred things, in light of modern knowledge, 214, 296ff.
saint, passing of, 298
Saladin, 68
sanctity, 214
Santayana, G., 134ff.
Schweitzer, A., 388
science,
  conflict of with religion, 301ff.
  progress in, 7ff., 104ff., 231ff.
scientists, as theologians, 32, 355ff.
Scopes Trial, 1925, 91
Sellars, R. W., 292, 363ff., 446
Septuagint, 156
sex and family, 19, 84ff., 114, 320
sex and religion, 19, 114, 320
Shapley, H., 240ff., 250, 261ff., 408
Sheol, 131
Shipley, M., 91, 303
Shotwell, J. T., 26, 107, 161, 304, 378, 444
sin,
  orthodox notion of, 207ff.
  ruled out in modern perspective, 283
  sense of, 46, 208, 284
Sinclair, U., 81
Smith, A. E., 58, 59
Smith, P., 117, 322
Smith, W. R., 151
social sciences, 13, 29ff.
soul,
  immortality of, 204

orthodox conception of, 203ff.
untenable hypothesis of, 273ff.
Spinoza, B., 150
spirit world,
disappearance of belief in, 291ff.
orthodox view of, 120, 209
Starbuck, E. D., 284
Steuart, J., 60
Straton, J. R., 134, 149, 216, 358, 434
Summers, M., 347
sumptuary legislation, 70ff.
Sunday, gloom of Christian, 51
Supreme Court of United States, 18, 69
Swift, M. I., 452
Syllabus of Errors, of 1864, 314ff.

taxation of church property, 83.
Taylor, H. O., 347
Ten Commandments and modern life, 181ff.
theism, 259
theologian, passing of, 29ff, 437ff.
theology, 116, 303, 436ff.
Thomas, N., 440
Thomson, J. A., 358
Tinkham, G. H., 61
Todd, D. B., 237
Tozzer, A. M., 16
Trumbull, C. G., 189
Tylor, E. B., 108, 120

Unitarian Humanism, 339ff., 456ff.
universe,
orthodox conception of, 192ff.
present-day conceptions of, 237

Van Loon, H., 75
Vaughan, D. D., 440
Veblen, T., 379
Vedder, H. C., 231
venereal disease, 86
Vulgate, 156

Wagner, C. E., 78
Walsh, J. J., 307
Ward, Harry, 353, 380ff.
Ward, Henshaw, 236
Ward, L. F., 109, 444, 446
Webb, S., 379
Wellhausen, J., 34, 151
Wheless, J., 34, 144ff., 191
White, A. D., 302
White, B., 440
White, W., 73
Whitehead, A. N., 39, 358
Wieman, H. N., 295, 329, 333, 344ff., 434ff.
Wiggam, A. E., 355
Willebrandt, M., 57
Wilson, C. T., 60
Wilson, W., 8
Worcester, E., 426, 447

Yahweh, source of his prestige, 128

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